

**Special Features This Issue**  
"I Made Oars" - "My Summer as a Deckhand"  
"Springfield Yacht & Canoe Club Celebrates 150 Years"

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# messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 18 - Number 2

June 1, 2000



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Volume 18 - Number 2  
June 1, 2000



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## Looking Ahead...

Howard Hannold reminisces about "Some of the Happiest Years of My Life"; Bob Reddington continues with Part 2 of "Do\*Me Sails to the Catboat Meeting"; Reinhard Zollistich concludes his 1000 mile odyssey "Paddling 'Round the Gaspé Peninsula"; and Nathaniel Bishop begins Chapter 9 of his "Four Months in a Sneakbox".

Charles Mantis tells us about "Sailing on the Cheap"; Greg Grundtisch discusses "Building the Harbor Cat 10"; Jim Hodges describes his "Christmas Kayaks"; and Fred Menzies reveals the workings of "Yacht Donations...an Alternative to Selling".

Dan Sheehan extolls the virtues of his "Rob Roy"; Tom Shaw recalls finding his "Perfect Boat"; E.A. Tucker shares memories of "Harry's Dory"; and Phil Bolger & Friends bring us "Martha Jane Revised".

Larry Ruttman brings us his "Interview with Leon Pezzack of Mousehole, Cornwall, England"; Ward Knockemus discusses "Why Metals Corrode"; and Brook Elgie explains why we need "Cabin Heat".

## Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor



Nice old timey scene on the cover of this issue, don't you think. I do, I fell in love with it amongst the vintage photos Jim Munsie sent along with his history of 150 years of the Springfield Canoe & Yacht Club. I've never had much interest in yacht clubs, not because they are in some way not deserving of it, but rather because I tend to view clubs of almost any sort as pretty much localized organizations of interest mostly only to their own memberships.

Jim invited us to attend the 150th Anniversary celebration of the club in June but it falls on Mystic Small Craft Weekend and that's where I'll be. But I found the material he sent along quite engrossing, for contemplating the span of time this one club has persevered in providing a local focus for small boaters in its home city is a real nostalgia trip. They got together in 1850, canoeists first, later welcoming aboard sailing yachtsmen, and in more recent times powerboating yachtsmen. 150 years pretty much encompasses the entire history of small boating as a leisure activity in this country.

My perspective on this time span was set by the fact that my great grandfather, a man who I have clear memory of when I was seven and he was 89, was two years old at the time this club was founded. And 63 years have since passed since my childhood memory of this ancient man was imprinted on my mind.

Perhaps contributing to this longevity is the innate democracy of the club, manifesting itself in it still being a working club with no employees. Every member is expected to participate in twice yearly club maintenance projects. A relocation away from the encroaching Springfield urban sprawl to nearby suburban Agawam took place in the mid-'30s after a disastrous fire. Subsequently in the '60s an addition of an alternate club mooring site further downstream in Connecticut was made when a canal was closed at Windsor Locks, Connecticut, shutting off direct access to the lower Connecticut and Long Island Sound. This club's will to live on is manifest in how it faced up to both these major crisis.

The canoeing is probably the least changed in scope over the 150 years. Today

maybe they have to deal with power boat and jet ski wakes and noise, but back in 1850 I'd bet the steamboats working on the river carrying freight and passengers churned it up pretty good. Sailing has evolved a lot since 1850 in rigs and hull designs, and of course motorboating did not exist in those earlier years.

Contemplating a founding member as a time traveler returning to the site of his long ago summer boating today, envision the impact upon this "charter" canoeist, who helped build that first clubhouse on a float on the riverbank, when he drops by the clubhouse for the 150th Anniversary. He'd have had to hunt it up for it has moved since his time and been enlarged, but once he got there, what a sight.

Our time travelling founding member could climb right into one of the canoes still in use, just as at his old club, and paddle off as he once had, that would be a familiar experience. But, I think he'd be hard pressed to pay attention to his paddling on this busy summer Sunday amidst the wonders of today's boat traffic. The old appeal of a day on the river would still be there, but the nature and the numbers of the small craft available for such enjoyment would overwhelm his senses.

I wonder if he might find his picture on the wall inside. I once had occasion to visit the Corinthian Yacht Club in nearby Marblehead, Massachusetts, this an old Boston money yachting establishment that probably goes back well over 100 years. The walls were lined with photo after photo of past commodores, they went on and on way back into the past. I wondered who today really knows who these people were? People who, at one time, carried on the responsibilities of maintaining the club so that today's members still can enjoy being a part of.

Probably few do, but what the members of the Springfield Canoe & Yacht Club surely have acquired is the awareness of what a significant group they belong to, an ongoing tradition still alive, uninterrupted since before the Civil War, serving the recreational small boaters who wish to enjoy boating on the Connecticut River of central Massachusetts.

## On the Cover...

Dockside scene at the Springfield Canoe & Yacht Club's original clubhouse on the Connecticut River at Springfield, Massachusetts on a sunny summer day in 1912. The club was already 62 years old at that time, and in this issue we present their story on their 150th anniversary.





# 2000 BOAT BUILDING SCHOOL SCHEDULE

## RESTORATION

**FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup> - 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2000 or OCTOBER 20<sup>TH</sup> - 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2000 or  
FEBRUARY 2<sup>ND</sup> - 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2001**

Fundamentals of boat restoration: surveying your wooden boat, plank replacement, joinery, laminated and steam bent rib/frame replacement plus condensed basic refinishing. *Mike Mahoney, Instructor. Fee: \$150*

## **BUILDING A ST. LAWRENCE LADIES SKIFF - PART I APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup> - 15<sup>TH</sup>, 2000**

In one week's time, construct a St. Lawrence Ladies Skiff to the half-way point in the traditional construction process. Work with a fourth generation boat builder to complete the planking and ribbing to form the hull shape. Some trim work may be completed. The skiff will be finished in September's Part II class. *Dan Sutherland, Instructor. Fee: \$450*

## **TAKING THE LINES OFF RUSHTON'S "NESSMUK" MAY 20<sup>TH</sup> - 21<sup>ST</sup>, 2000**

A two-day class where students will determine the basic hull shape of a lightweight small craft and render it in a full scale drawing. *Everett Smith, Instructor. Fee: \$100*

## **CANVAS CANOE RESTORATION / JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup>, 2000**

Demonstration in the preparation of canvas and filling a wood canvas canoe and other basics in canvas work, with hands-on opportunities. *John McGreivey, Instructor. Fee: \$100*

## REFINISHING / JUNE 10<sup>TH</sup> - 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2000

Learn the basics of traditional wooden boat refinishing: finish removal, surface preparation, staining, application of sealers and varnish, painting systems, seam compounds and post restoration care. *Mike Mahoney, Instructor. Fee: \$100*

## CANING / JULY 22<sup>ND</sup>, 2000

A one-day total hands-on class that explores the basics of caning. The student will receive a sample seat to begin the craft of caning. The various types of caning and modern materials will be covered. *Patty Thompson, Instructor. Fee: \$75*

## PADDLE-MAKING / AUGUST 26<sup>TH</sup>, 2000

A day course of hands-on paddle-making exploring the basics. At the end of the class you take home a paddle! Class participants will have an opportunity to try various paddles in water at the Museum's new livery. *Patrick Smith, Instructor. Fee: \$75*

## **BUILDING A ST. LAWRENCE LADIES SKIFF - PART II SEPTEMBER 23<sup>RD</sup> - 30<sup>TH</sup>, 2000**

Following Part I, the Ladies Skiff construction will continue in a total hands-on approach with fitting out the decks and rails and installing floorboards and seats. Completing the finish work to the point where the skiff can be launched at week's end. The boat will be added to the Museum's livery. *Dan Sutherland, Instructor. Fee: \$450*

*The Boat Building School is housed in the Museum's Boat Building and Restoration Shop and the Edward John Noble Historic Stone Building. Combined, the two facilities offer more than 5,000 square feet of space and all the necessary equipment for the classes. It is not required, but students may wish to bring their own hand tools, such as planes, chisels, flat-head screw driver, tape measure, wood rasp, etc.*

*Classes start at 9:00 AM.*

*Museum members are eligible for a 10% discount on boat building/restoration class tuition.*

*For more information, write or call:*

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# THE BOAT BUILDING SCHOOL STAFF

## DAN SUTHERLAND

Dan is a fourth generation boat builder and Antique Boat Show judge. He owns and operates Sutherland Boat & Coach Inc. in Hammondsport, New York.

## PATRICK SMITH

Pat owns and operates the West Hollow Boat Company in Naples, New York. Pat is a fan of non-powered boats and is an active participant in the Museum's Festival of Oar, Paddle and Sail.

## JOHN MCGREIVEY

John owns and operates the McGreivey Canoe Shop in Cato, New York. John has been in the canvas business for over 25 years. He is an authorized canvas repairer for Old Town Canoe.

## MIKE MAHONEY

Mike has been involved with the Museum since the mid-eighties. He manages Wooden Boat Specialties in the 1000 Islands.

## EVERETT SMITH

Everett owns and operates the Everett Boat Works in Canton, New York. He has been involved with the Museum for over ten years and at one time served as Curator of the Antique Boat Museum.

## PATTY THOMPSON

Patty will graduate from Environmental Science and Forestry School at Syracuse University in May, 2000. She started working at Sutherland's Boat and Coach last year. Patty recently restored a 1927 Todd Trout Boat for her Dad.



# You write to us about...

## Activities & Events...

### Connecticut Riverfest

Hulbert Outdoor Center's Canoe & Traditional Small Craft Day this year will become part of the Connecticut Riverfest to be held on June 3 at the Wilder Dam Picnic Area on the Connecticut River in Wilder, Vermont near White River Junction. An area for our traditional small craft and displays will be set aside for us. Interested persons are invited to join us, set up a display, show off a boat, have a good time. For details contact us.

Deb Williams, Hulbert Outdoor Center, 2968 Lake Morey Rd., Fairlee, VT 05045-9400, (802) 333-3405

### More at Zoar Outdoor

As we enter our 11th season of operation at Zoar Outdoor in Charlemont, Massachusetts on the Deerfield River, our 2000 schedule of events features some new programs:

Family Fun and Group Activities which include our float raft trips, sit-on-top kayaking, parent-child paddling, and kids' kayak crazes.

Fathers Day (June 18th) special on Zoar Gap raft trips on which fathers raft free when accompanied by two family members at full price.

Intro to Playboating clinics for paddlers who feel comfortable on class III whitewater, who want to get into surfing holes and squirting eddy lines.

Back by popular demand are our Float Raft Trips and Sit-On-Top kayak rentals on the lower section of the Deerfield River. These half-day trips are designed for people with young children or for those who want a low-intensity trip. The scenic nature of this section allows guests to enjoy the beauty of the river valley from a kayak or a raft.

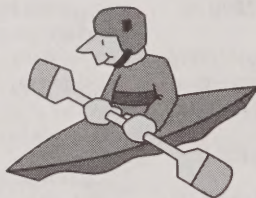
Our Sit-On-Top kayak rental program has a total of 24 Perception Torrent kayaks, stable, easy to control and requiring minimal instruction. They're fun for experienced paddlers and ideal for novices who aren't ready to get into a decked kayak.

Zoar Outdoor was the first rafting company and outdoor center based on the Deerfield River in western Massachusetts. Our core rafting and instruction programs have grown to include locations across New England and now offer adventures for everybody from chil-

dren to seniors and for skill levels from first-timer to expert.

Please feel free to contact me for further details. We have recently redesigned our website with lots of new features and news at [www.zoaroutdoor.com](http://www.zoaroutdoor.com).

Karen Blom, Zoar Outdoor, P.O. Box 245, Charlemont, MA 01339, (413) 339-4010, fax: (413) 337-8436, <[info@zoaroutdoor.com](mailto:info@zoaroutdoor.com)>



## Information of Interest...

### Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory Online Fundraising Campaigns

Through GivingCapital, a recently launched company which provides nonprofits the opportunity to accept online donations from credit cards, Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory has established two online campaigns to benefit our work with local at-risk youth on our website at [www.libertynet.org/pwbf](http://www.libertynet.org/pwbf): A Marine Summer Camp Sponsorship Campaign ran April 24 through June 1; and a Marine Education Initiative Program Campaign is ongoing since April 24 through March 1, 2001

Donations will help support Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory's efforts to offer a Marine Summer Camp for at-risk youth. Individuals can sponsor a child by visiting [www.libertynet.org/pwbf](http://www.libertynet.org/pwbf) and donating to the Marine Summer Camp Sponsorship Campaign.

Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory offers local youth various marine related projects including the building of a 15' wooden canoe. Used as an interactive method of teaching a large array of academic and life skills, these projects incorporate a focused curriculum of math, history, environmental education, science and geography, while also helping children develop the essential skills of communication, cooperation, tool use, computer literacy and self-confidence.

Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory was founded in 1996 by Philadelphia residents Chad Brenner and Geoff McKonly. For information call (215) 755-2400.

Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory, 2045 West Moyamensing Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19145

### Erie Canal Guide Postscript

Since I first wrote my small boat guide to New York state's Erie Canal, which you were kind enough to publish, I have returned several times and rowed for the second time almost all of the recommended small boat routes. Here are some additional reactions and notes:

The canal holds up as one of the most underrated small boat waterways in the U.S. After 650 or so miles of rowing and camping along it I am still hooked.

The central rivers route and Mohawk River route remain the two big trips. A week is about right for the central rivers route. The owner of the Village Marina on Seneca Lake provided me a shuttle back from Oswego for a reasonable fee.

For the Mohawk a week is not enough. For comfort allow nine days. Begin at the Riverside Marina south of Rome and take out at Lock #C-1 on the Champlain Canal. Amtrak can get you back to Rome.

The Champlain Canal did not hold up so well in its entirety. I found the line canal above Hudson Falls less interesting this time. I also did 25 miles of lower Lake Champlain, and because of its monotony, lack of features and poor logistics, think it worth omitting.

I would redo the Champlain Canal by launching at Hudson Falls, entering the main Erie Canal by ascending the famous "Flight of Five" locks and taking out at Erie Lock #7. Four to five days should be sufficient. Amtrak runs back up to Hudson Falls from the Albany area.

The western line canal from N. Tonawanda to central New York lends itself to a couple or group with more than one car for daytripping from one historic town to the next, staying in motels and eating out. Scout out your towns first, not all are equally inviting.

Small boats are not always welcome. Example 1: The village of Seneca Falls singularly refused me permission to camp. I will not return. Example 2: I could no longer camp at Lock #23 on the Oneida River, the Canal's loveliest campground, because the small wooden dock had been removed for repairs two years ago.

One important caveat for the summertime. I am told that sections of the canal become invaded by dangerous and obnoxious boating types, especially on weekends. All the more reason to go in spring or fall.

Finally, readers may wonder how I managed the logistics of 650 miles of canal exploration 2,800 miles from my home in Seattle. It was all due to the hospitality of my brother, William Hornung and his wife Libby. They provided me a home away from home in Red Creek, central New York.

Regretfully my brother may not live to read all of this guide in which he was so helpful. I therefore dedicate it to his memory.

Jack Hornung, Seattle, WA.

### Help Save Old Boats

Okay, so we saved a bunch of boats last year and now we must save more this year before they end up in the dump. My spring 2000 issue of *Boneyard Boats* is just out with 47 boats listed but we need more. Please let me know if you know of any or have one yourself. We are the only newsletter listing abandoned, forgotten boats valued under \$5,000.

We publish three times a year, spring, summer and fall. You can subscribe for \$12 for three issues and help us to carry on this boatsaving effort.

Ginger Martus, *Boneyard Boats*, P.O. Box 2065, Vincentown, NJ 08088



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## Opinions...

### Ugly

I think a triangular sail cut by a straight sprit on the off tack is ugly. If you agree I suggest:

On a convenient wooden base, probably not the living room floor, lay down a 12 inch strip of plastic, kitchen film, super market plastic bags, whatever, and drive two nails near one edge separated by the length of the finished sprit plus about 6". Leave the nails proud 1".

From a 3/4" plank saw out 3/16" battens/ strips longer than the distance between the nails. Spring one batten between the nails to a curve equal to the draft of your sail (6" ?). Drive a nail at the peak of the curve to hold the shape. By eye fair out the curve and add more nails as needed.

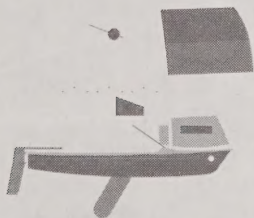
Now butter another batten with epoxy and clamp it to the first. Next day add one or two more battens. Keep adding strips/battens until you think it is stiff enough (probably about 6 or 7 for a small boat).

After the last layer is set pull the nails and cut and finish the ends as you would for a straight sprit. Sand and paint to suit.

About two thirds of the way up your mast fasten a light (1/8") line. Mount the sprit as you would a straight sprit, then hold the sprit horizontal and half hitch the light line to the sprit about one third of its length back from the snotter end. That's it

Yes I know, Phil Bolger says, and I agree, a straight sprit is cheaper and probably does not adversely affect the sail much on the off tack, but we are talking "pretty" here. Your choice.

Chuck Wilson, Baywood Park, CA



## This Magazine...

### Appreciation & Also Sorrow

I have really enjoyed Richard Carsen's comments in his "Dreamboats" articles. he has answered a lot of questions and quite a few "I wonder ifs..."

Sorry to read about the passing of Bill Foden and Bill Atkin, many people you get to know through the printed word becomes friends, even though you never meet them in person.

L.W. Johnson, Brighton, MI

### Classified Ad Response

Regards my recent classified ad offering my 22' Drascombe for sale, the response was great, over 15 calls from mid-Atlantic to mid-west. I got my price. Maybe someone should be selling these boats.

Rudy Carlson, Sandwich, NH

### Try My Art

Can you run my artist classified ad some more? I haven't had much mail lately, and not a single recent order. Too bad there weren't more takers. I don't think your readers really know what kind of art I am capable of turning out. The few who took a chance were surprised. I shipped the paintings at no risk; they all had their paintings before they ever had to pay anything. Even kayaks paddling a river look good in watercolor with the right background scenery.

What about a cover shot for your mag? I did several takes on the skipjacks on the Chesapeake, the last remaining commercial sail vessels still used in the fishing industry. Stanley Norman is probably the best known, retired from active oyster dredging and used to take out people and educate them on the history and operation of the skipjacks. The enclosed drawing is one that could be transferred into a pure ink work.

This art thing gets like an old diesel sometimes, hard to turn over but once she's runnin', hey ain't life sweet!

Driftwood Dan, 220 W. Palomino Dr., Tempe, AZ 85282

## Poets' Corner...

### The Rockfinder

God gives us each some skills of note;  
Some talent, quite unique  
On which we brag or sometimes dote  
Our pride we're won't to speak.

But I've a friend whose gift may be  
Like none on earth this day.  
His a capability,  
This art, he won't display.

My friend's a sailor of great skill.  
He knows the wind and wave.  
In lightest air, his kites, he'll fill.  
In storms, he's really brave.

But when he's piloting, in tight,  
His talent stands alone.  
For as the stars come out at night,  
He's sure to find a stone.

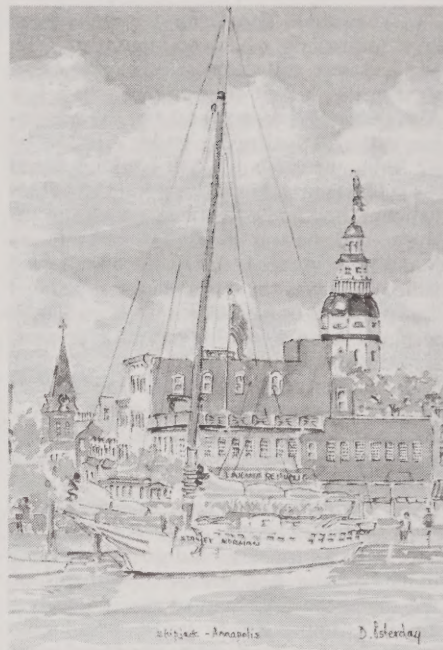
Like lovers to their sure embrace;  
Like magnets to the steel;  
He knows somehow he'll have to face  
A dent upon his keel.

The harbor could be made of sand.  
A channel to the dock,  
And yet he's come to understand  
Somewhere, there'll be a rock.

"I'll give it up," he said to me  
"Offshore, adventure knocks  
No stones out there, and I'll be free  
Of those accursed rocks."

So off he stood toward rising sun  
The salt filled spray he'd feel  
And free he was as day begun  
With fathoms 'neath his keel.

The flying fish that often fell  
Upon the deck at night  
Maintained a sense of feeling well  
Instead of grounding's fright.



And thus he made his easting well  
And loved the open sea.  
And felt a comfort in the swell  
And knew he could feel free.

He found that he could lay below.  
Self steering was his slave,  
And to Nirvana he would go  
He barely felt a wave.

He holystoned the decks and more.  
He painted spars and cleats  
There's not too difficult a chore  
The work, his skill defeats.

His reading he completed fast.  
He read the oldest sailors.  
He read of storms present and past,  
And of some famous bailers.

And then one day a sail appeared  
But he was down below.  
No bearings changed; no courses veered  
And thus the fates bestow.

He saw a bow destroy his bunk;  
The sea begin to flow.  
He streaked toward light, lest he be sunk  
And henceforth be below.

And then he deftly climbed aboard  
And said, "Sir, I don't mean to sulk  
But that's my boat you've deathly gored."  
As they floated o'er his hulk.

The owner, boat without a dent,  
Said "She sure took a sock,  
But I know she's made of ferrocement  
She's built just like a rock."

Stephen N. Bobo, 1995



They did it. The *Amistad* recreation was launched without a hitch on March 25, 2000. She had been rolled out of her construction shed in the duPont shipbuilding area a few days earlier. When we got there, she was sitting in the lift dock on her trailer. A little after 12:30pm, the symbolic chains holding her to the land were cut, her bell was tolled 53 times to honor the 53 who fought against being enslaved and she was slowly lowered into the Mystic River before 10,000 attendees. I must admit that I was somewhat disappointed that the launching was not down ways, ending in a splash. Even so the lowering was impressive and stately.

It was reported that, due to her pre-launch moistening, she made only a couple of cupsful of water. The lower masts were out in the spar shed, ready to be dropped into place. When my kid went over to inspect them, it was clear that their diameter was almost as great as his height. He was awed. The booms, gaffs, topmasts and yards were lying in the building shed waiting to be shaped on the spar lathe. This part of the exhibit was almost as impressive to anyone who knows boatbuilding as her backbone had been when the keel and first three frames were set up.

As with many current vessels, such as *Clearwater*, *Amistad* is not a replica of the original. As she is to be certified to carry 49 passengers as well as 12 crew, she has to meet Coast Guard standards of design and construction. Although the Coast Guard was cooperative in her progress, she was frequently inspected as she went together. Once she is completed, there should be little trouble with the certification.

The attendees were almost as interest-

## Amistad Launched at Mystic Seaport

By Eric Russell

ing as the Seaport. In the 40 plus years I have been coming here, I have never seen so many people. About half the crowd was non-white, church groups and others chartered buses. Pete Seeger and the Beacon United Church of Christ reached out to several of the local communities. They had to turn people away as their charter was oversubscribed. The United Church of Christ was one of the major sponsors of the vessel and was also a major supporter of the legal effort which gained acquittal for the 53 involuntary passengers. Other attendees included Fung Lim, who is building the new yawlboat for *Clearwater* in Queens. His site will soon become the East River ApprenticeShop. Four Rockport ApprenticeShop grads who had worked on *Amistad's* construction greeted Lance Lee.

In addition to the vessels belonging to Mystic Seaport, *Mystic Whaler*, *Argia* and the frigate *Rose* were in attendance. When the launch was complete, *Rose* fired a salute, followed by guns from *Mystic Whaler*. When the event was completed, the vessels dispersed, with *Rose* tying up at the Chubb pier, near the *Morgan*. As anyone who has visited Mystic knows, there is a sharp turn in the channel of the Mystic River at Lighthouse Point. Rather than chance running aground, *Rose* came to a stop opposite the *Brilliant* landing and allowed push boats to position her for the final leg to the pierhead.

My 8-1/2 year old son did not want to come to the launch. Once he got there, Mystic Seaport and the event itself grabbed him. In addition to the exhibits re-

lated to *Amistad* and its history the regular displays and demonstrations really got his attention. Watching him climbing through the *Charles W. Morgan* brought back memories of my first visit to the Seaport when I was about his age. When we left, he said he wanted to come back as soon as he could.

He especially enjoyed the blacksmithing shop and was thrilled that Rick Spencer, the woodcarver, taught him to carve a feather. At the small boat livery, he was able to relate the maintenance he saw to what we do on our boats at Floating the Apple. Static exhibits held as much of his attention as the demonstrations.

One of the issues *Amistad* raises is that there were very few African-American shipwrights around to work on the project. One of them, Wayne Bartow, came up to Mystic from Beacon, New York every weekend to help. There is the very real problem that, initially, there may not be enough minority people willing to get involved in the project when *Amistad* moves to her home port of New Haven.

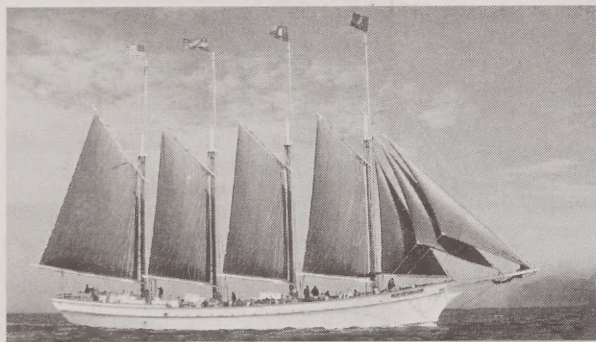
At least in the northeast, non-whites are severely under-represented in American boating. In New York City, efforts are being made to reach out through schools and community organizations. The expectation for all kids should be that access to the water is for all of us, not just a privileged few.

In Operation Sail, '76, the schooner *Western Union* was chartered and temporarily renamed *Amistad*. This time in her own right, *Amistad* is expected to participate in OPSAIL 2000 from July 3-9 in New York and from July 11-14 in New London. If you can make it to New Haven between July 15 and 24, she is expected to arrive in her home port for the first time. A large celebration is anticipated.

Next time a vessel is launched and you hear about it, be there. It is a genuinely communal activity and relatively rare.

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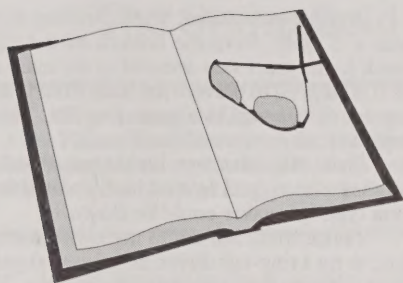
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## Book Review

### *The Architect's Apprentice*

The Story of the Design and Construction of a Wooden Sailboat

By Gary M. Schwarzman  
Sheridan House Inc. 145 Palisade Street Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522, 1998

Hard Cover \$23.95

Reviewed by John Hawkinson

The reincarnation of an old love, in this case a venerable boat, is a labor of anxieties, expectations, sleepless nights and hidden costs. Gary Schwarzman, a seasoned ocean voyager, faced the need to replace his staunch 50 year old Bantry Bay when heavy weather in the South Atlantic strained her seams. His book, *The Architect's Apprentice*, traces the gestation of the new 42' cutter, *Anasazi* from thought to action. This book is the inside out of Bill Atkins' *Of Yachts and Men*, where the author described the boatowner as seen by the designer and builder.

The Schwartzmans are a family team, with Beth a strong influence on the ecology of the ship. The two daughters grew up with the old boat and are at college graduate school level by the time the new boat is launched. The *Anasazi* was modeled after their needs and desires with a strong dose of the basic offshore aesthetics of the owner. Had he not known what he wanted in a cruising boat, it might have been different.

Design of a sailboat requires an infinite series of compromises relating the size, shape and dreams of the prospective owner to his pocketbook. A skilled designer must bring to the lofting table the necessary specifications and drawings for the builder to translate into a composite whole that suits the owner. In bygone years the classified pages of *The Rudder* and *Yachting* magazines were shingled with small but respectable listings of yacht designers. Today's designers are rarely found by advertisement. Schwarzman first summarized his needs for the new boat, then had to look for a designer and builder. He found winners in Chuck Paine and Damian McLaughlin.

Custom boat building provides considerable thinking, rethinking, designing, redesigning and sometimes tearing something done apart and rebuilding it. There were a few lumps in the road, but a good designer and a skillful builder surmounted the difficulties. The hull was strip planked with fir, with three diagonal layers of fir veneer, an outer quarter-inch mahogany planking, and then glassed. She should be "some strong". The photographs bear witness to first class construction and pleasing

details.

The appendix details the author's experience with the components. He clearly states his reasons for each choice, and indicates where controversy arose between the designer, the builder and himself. It will be interesting to see what modifications to *Anasazi* occur over the next ten years.

What is the ultimate advantage of having a yacht built just to your own specifications? Why chose to build a one-off wooden

sailboat whose performance will be less predictable in this age of clones? In an epilogue the author compares the *Anasazi* with a stock cruising boat of similar size and cost. Gary Schwarzman had a list of criteria that bear scrutiny by anyone thinking of a boat: Beauty, strength, seaworthiness, comfort, ability under sail and cost. One glimpse of his new yacht under sail as shown on the back of the dust jacket is enough for me. She is gorgeous, and there is no hint of look-alike about her.

## What's Right for Bright?

By Gary Schwarzman

With gratitude to Robb White for his report on the durability of two-part polyurethane varnish, I'd like to add some info of my own and pose a couple of questions as well.

A few years ago I painted a dozen or so combinations of varnish and sealer on some wood samples and took them to *Anasazi* Testing Laboratories, which is the south-facing shed roof on the back of my house, exposed to the sun and the salt wind off Vineyard Sound. For a two-part polyurethane I used West 1000, which at the time was being promoted by the Gougeon folks as the ideal varnish to apply over their West System epoxy (like much good science, this experiment contained a tragic flaw that could not be known at the time. Gougeon subsequently left the varnish business, and the product is no longer being sold. But their technical folks have assured me that it was all a marketing decision, and the varnish had excellent UV resistance).

Just as Robb found with his samples from the more market-savvy Italians, the two-part stuff outlasted everything else by a wide margin. Unlike Robb's results, but just like it said on the can, my tests also demonstrated that thinned West 1000 was its own best primer, although the epoxy was almost as effective and has other obvious advantages in boatbuilding. So we went ahead and varnished everything on *Anasazi* with the mixture which, like all of the two-part polyurethanes, brushes badly, wastes what you don't

use, smells like it must be taking years off your life, and costs more than a good bottle of single-malt. But, we thought, we're buying the highest durability there is.

Well, the stuff was durable all right. Dragging chain over the varnished rail cap hardly scratched it. And it stood up to sunlight quite well, remaining clear and hard. But that sunlight went right through the clear hard varnish to the Douglas fir underneath, turning the wood's reddish glow to a bleached-out yellow. It seemed that the varnish was protecting itself from UV damage at the expense of the wood.

We all know that sunlight consists of photons, which are very small, but there are lots of 'em. The UV protection in varnish is supposed to capture those photons so that they don't go through, yet in a way that doesn't damage the varnish itself, at least not until all of its UV protection stuff is used up. At least that's what I thought. Does anyone out there understand this process well enough to explain these results? Robb, did you find the wood being bleached under your varnish?

As for *Anasazi*, we've switched to the older-fashioned single-part polyurethane, Z-Spar Flagship to be specific. I can report that it lasts quite well, brushes like real varnish, and smells better than the two-part products of my experience. I also can report that the two-part is damned hard stuff to get off.



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## Part I: The Preparation

*Do\*Me's* trip to the Catboat Association 1975 Annual Meeting at Mystic Seaport did not start on January 11, 1975, as her log indicates, but rather in September, 1973. Nobody had ever shown up before at an annual meeting in a catboat, perhaps because our meetings have always been in January. So, since someone had to be the first, I thought to myself, "Why not give it a try?"

To make a run like this in midwinter, one must have a first rate boat in tip-top condition, adequately supplied with at least two of everything normally carried onboard. One must be ready and able to meet and deal with any emergency that might arise, because at that time of year you are mostly on your own. Having determined to attempt this trip, I put all my thoughts on *Do\*Me's* needs in order to arrive at a plan of what to do. We start by having one hell of a good sail down to Cape May and back, for this will be the last sail for quite a while. From now on, I have a lot of work ahead of me.

*Do\*Me* was hauled just after Labor Day, 1973 and surveyed. Now, don't get me wrong, *Do\*Me* is in very good shape at the time with no complaints, but I must go over her to prepare her for the worst that might befall us. The first thing was to yank out Mr. Palmer, although he is only eight years old. To avoid any possible trouble, I sent the engine to the International Harvester dealer in Freehold to be completely rebuilt (the Palmer P-60 marine engine has an International Harvester block, and all parts are interchangeable with the International Cub tractor engine). I explained to them that there is nothing wrong with the engine, but for my planned trip, I wished to have everything working as well as possible.

Luck is with us, as the mechanic who is assigned to do my engine has been with the tractor division for 25 years, and for 18 years has only worked on the International Cub tractor engine. By just using the P-60 block and "much wampum", we get back an engine as good as new with a new alternator, starter, carburetor, and distributor. The engine came back in March of 1974, but was not installed in *Do\*Me* until September of 1974. Altogether, it was out almost one year.

Now, back to the hull. It was completed stripped of all paint, caulking and cotton, every seam routed to get clean bare wood on the plank edges. Next, all planking was completely refastened using 2,000 2-1/2" #12 silicon bronze screws. Rub rails and toe rails were

# Do\*Me Sails 200 Miles - Part I To The January 1975 Annual Catboat Association Meeting

By Robert L. Reddington

taken off and 8' sections of the port and starboard side decks were removed. When the hull was stripped, the top planks were found to be a little punky in a couple of spots. After they were removed, a few frame heads were found to be soft. Each soft frame was cut back about 4" to 9" and sistered.

Then new planking and decking were installed, decks were glassed over, and toe and rub rails re-installed. All the hull seams were caulked with new cotton caulking and primed with Boat-Life primer. Then it took 30 tubes of Boat-Life to fill them. The garboard planks on both sides were stripped and set in bedding compound. New stopwaters were installed along the shaft log, and bronze steps were secured to rudder. Extra large scuppers were installed to take care of large amounts of water.

Mind you, all of this work is time consuming, and working alone, sometimes you think you will never come to the end. Laying out in the cold and wet makes you think, "Is it all worth it, or am I just plain CRAZY?"

Finally, the exterior of the hull looks real good, and on goes a coat of primer. Now, on to other projects. Oh! Oh! We forgot to install all new thru holes and recondition the prop. Back on.

In going over *Do\*Me* from stem to stern, many things still to be done were found, but since I wanted her in the best condition possible, they were done. This is what there were:

Some new floor frames; new king plank; new floorboards; larger hatches in cockpit; extra battery boxes; more shelves; more storage space made available; centerboard trunk gone over; bilges cleaned out about three times; limber holes really cleaned out; extra tiller made for Edson steering; auxiliary steering set up; all new half-inch Dacron running rigging; all stitching on sail re-stitched.

Then came her gear. There is nothing that was not either rebuilt or replaced with new. Just to give you an idea:

Edson steering taken out and gone over; bronze plate the quadrant rides on replaced; all blocks disassembled and soaked in linseed oil; all block bearings and axle pins replaced; Battery switches replaced; new gas-kets and plungers in bilge pumps (*Do\*Me* has three, but only one is used).

Some of this refitting resulted from my own ideas, some things I copied from others, and some tips came out of our own CBA bulletins.

Let's start at the top of the mast. I rigged a collar with two eyes where I have a permanent three-part tackle secured. Have you ever tried to do anything with the rigging when you just cannot get to the top? I now have a boson's chair that takes me to the roof.

Also, on the mast, I have a spotlight that shines down into the cockpit. With the main hatch up, the spotlight shines directly on Mr. Palmer. To do this, I routed 1/4" x 1/2" the length of the mast and embedded #14 wire. I also did the same for the masthead light and radio antenna, since I have a 100 watt radio on board.

A glut was installed. This is nothing more than a 2" x 3" from the bottom of the king plank to the mast step secured to the mast after it is stepped to prevent the mast from jumping out of her step in a pounding sea. This I copied from our own Oscar Pease.

From the other eye on the masthead, a halyard was rigged from which a small ball-loon type spinnaker could be flown.

I once tried, but not to my own satisfaction, to rig a ring-tail driver, as suggested years ago by Bill Schofield in an early bulletin. The only real way to set this sail is to learn to walk on water or be towed 10' astern in a dinghy.

Next, we come to my icebreaker. This again is very simple. Have you ever seen what skim ice will do to a hull? It will damn near cut your boat in half at the water line unless you have an icebreaker. You take four 6' pieces of 2" x 12" and join them all together with three old garage door hinges. This contraption is hung over the side with six lines. It should be about half in the water or about 5" below the water line. After it has been checked out, the pins should be taken out of the hinges and the hinges drilled out so the pins fit very loosely. This makes it easy to disassemble the rig for storing in the cockpit when not in use.

Getting *Do\*Me* ready the way that I wanted her proved to be quite a chore. I started loading gear on board sometime in November of 1974. First, all inside ballast came out of the boat. Calculations showed that 1800-2100lbs of gear and supplies would be put back on board. These were packed and unpacked a dozen times until things were finally stored the way I wanted them. To give a rough idea of how much gear was put aboard, in February 1975 it took three trips with our station wagon to empty the excess gear off the boat. Here is a list of some of the main items.

The ground tackle included: 100' of 3/8 galvanized chain; two 200' lengths of 3/4" nylon; two Yachtsman anchors; one 85lbs and one 40lbs; one 25lb Danforth; one 13lb Danforth; four 100' lengths of 1/2" nylon.

Also loaded were: Four 12-volt batteries (Mr. Palmer only needs one); three 10lb bottles of propane for the stove and heater (stored on deck).

The plastic water tank was taken out to make space for an extra 25 gallons of gasoline. This brought the total to about 45 gallons of gas, which would give us about 50 hours of running time in the event of any problem. To replace the 15 gallons of water, my wife, Betty, saved the plastic gallon milk jugs for over a month. We took a total of 75 one-gallon milk containers (three quarters full to allow for freezing). These jugs, when empty, could all be tied together to provide quite a bit of flotation.

The starboard cockpit seat was taken out, a stock of assorted lumber 14" high, 18" deep, and 8' long was packed, and then the seat replaced.


Also loaded were: One case of #10-weight oil; a three-gallon galvanized pail full of assorted brass pipe fitting, replacements for everything on board; two 12-quart wooden soda cases full of extra blocks, cleats, shackles, thimbles, ring bolts and assorted hardware; and enough line of different sizes to replace every line on board twice, and then some, about 3,300' total.

So much for the preparation; Now, on to the log entries.

(To Be Continued)

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# The Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club Celebrates 150 Years!

By Jim Munsie, Director, SYCC

"The Springfield Canoe Club is one of the most thriving of local institutions, having increased its membership in a couple of years from 35 to 100, while it has one of the handsomest, best arranged club houses and a fleet that is not equaled in the country. The young people are beginning to realize the delights of our convenient river, and it has become quite the fad to join the Canoe Club, have one's own private canoe, and take one's best girl out paddling." (*Springfield Graphic*, June 11, 1892)

As the Connecticut River wanders along its 410-mile length it washes fertile farmland, cool uninhabited valleys and urban areas on its way to the sea. From the river's early pristine days, through the industrial pollution era, to its recent rebirth as an American Heritage River, the Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club has been blessed with it visiting our two locations; Springfield/Agawam, Massachusetts and Chester Connecticut. The river's rebirth is recreating the recreational uses so common a hundred and fifty years ago when the SYCC had its beginnings.

The Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club began as the Springfield Canoe Association in 1850 in a boathouse on a raft rented from Mr. W. Spencer at the foot of Elm Street, in Springfield, Massachusetts adjacent to the landing of the riverboat *Sylvia*. When these accommodations became too small, the Association built their own 50' x 20' floating boat-house which they occupied until 1892. The canoe club then built, on land, a three story brick and wood building at a cost of \$4,000. The canoe house had a brick first story capable of storing 80 canoes. The second story was used for receptions and had locker rooms, a workshop and baths plus space for the Steward and his family to live. On the third level were observation rooms and deck.

Membership was restricted to only men who owned canoes. In 1887 the club voted to admit 18 women as honorary members. Early members included the first Commodore, S. Bowles, Everett Barney the inventor of the metal-clasp ice skate, local canoe champion Emil Knapp and many other prominent citizens. The club also had a camp, Calla Shasta, a short distance downriver in a picnic grove on land owned by E.H. Smith, the founder and owner of Riverside Park. There were ten cottages on the land. A party at Calla Shasta was an event looked forward to and long remembered. Mr. Smith owned several large charter yachts on the Connecticut River; the *Calla*, the steamer *Mascot* and later the *Sylvia*.

Before long sailboats and launches were moored in front of the clubhouse. As the number of sailboats and launches increased, the owners wanted a club of their own. In 1884 the yacht and canoe club merged under one Association and was incorporated with separate commodores. Later in 1929 the clubs officially became one with the name Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club. In 1900 the canoe club was much larger than the yacht club. The canoe club furnished canoes, paddles, carpets and seat backs but most members owned their own canoes.

Dues were \$12/year with a \$5 initiation fee. The club hired a Steward, who lived on the second floor with his family, and an assistant. By 1908 there were about fifty yachts anchored in front of the club.

The canoe club had several planned trips each summer like Patriot's Day up the Agawam (now Westfield) River with a por-

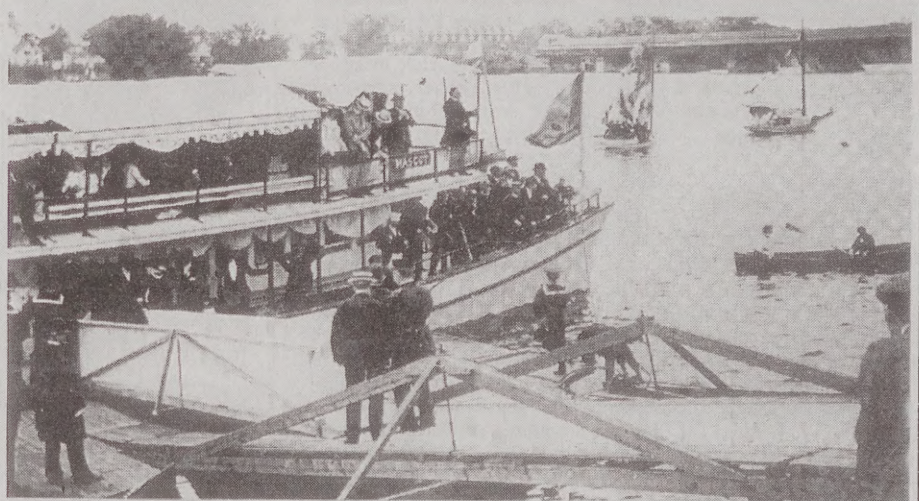
March 25, 1999

SPRINGFIELD JOURNAL

## Western Mass. in 1899

### LOCAL HISTORY

By LARRY GORMALLY



The steamboat "Mascot" arriving at the Springfield Canoe Club dock on June 21, 1899. President McKinley is standing alone on the upper deck. The old covered bridge can be seen in the background. (Photo courtesy of the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum.)

tage around the Mittneague dam. The July 4th trip was to the Hartford Canoe Club in Hartford, Connecticut, and on Labor Day the canoes were shipped to Greenfield, Massachusetts and paddled back home with a portage around the Holyoke dam. Boat parades were a common sight on any given holiday. The club sponsored several clambakes on what is now the site of the Bondi's Island waste treatment facility.

Races were held on Saturday afternoons for the canoes and sailing yachts. Club member Clarence Euson was a national (canoe) champion as was Everett Barney and his son George. Emil Knapp, a founding member, was also a local canoe competitor with many trophies to his name in addition to being club treasurer. Very active in the club, Mr. Knapp was a major contributor towards the purchase of a war canoe for the club and donated a silver punch bowl canoe trophy to the Association that was most likely purchased with the \$40,000 he embezzled from the Chicopee National Bank where he was head bookkeeper.

Mr. Knapp's accounting "errors" were discovered and he was subsequently arrested and convicted. As part of his restitution, he was required to turn over all his canoes, equipment, cottage at Calla Shasta and trophies to help defray some of the loss to the bank. Emil Knapp was also removed from membership in the Canoe Club but the club was allowed to

keep the silver punch bowl.

Other clubs to share the Springfield riverbank included the Atlanta Boat Club and Rickrimmon Boat and Canoe Club as well as local school rowing teams. These clubs faded from the scene but the Springfield Club remains today.

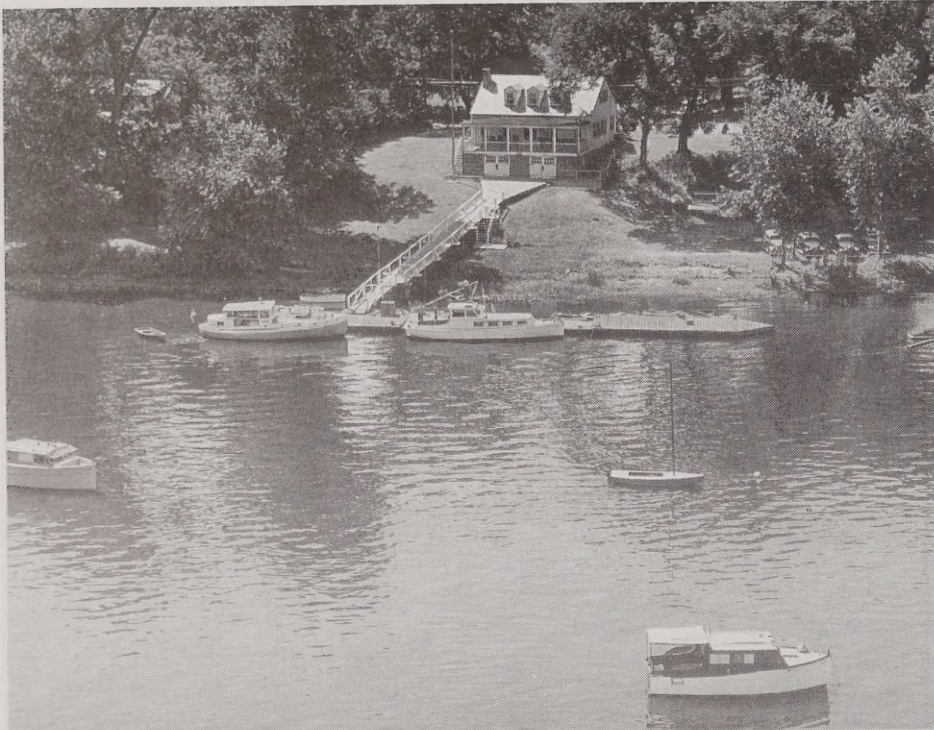
During the mid to late 1800s the club was a co-host for the Harvard-Yale rowing regatta in addition to local and other national rowing and boating events. Several trophies and other memorabilia can be seen at the clubhouse, the Springfield Historical Society and at the Indian Motorcycle Museum. Mr. Hendee, the founder of Indian, was a powerboat racer and champion.

When the city of Springfield dedicated the (original) Memorial Bridge, the club had decorated boats in attendance, sponsored outboard motor races and had an open house. At that time, when anything happened on the river the clubhouse, being so close to the center of the city, was always crowded. Spectators would line the banks from the clubhouse south to Longmeadow to watch races and parades.

Following the First World War and for several years afterward the membership dropped dramatically due to the new popularity of the automobile as a leisure-time family activity. This was the major reason for the final consolidation of the clubs in 1929.

A humorous Springfield newspaper article in February, 1931 recounts a banquet





The new clubhouse in 1940.

honoring some of the founders and original members of the Canoe Club. Reminiscing about river trips, parties and events filled the evening's conversation as, no doubt, cigar smoke filled the air. One incident recounted a member's accidental dip in the water during a spring outing far downriver. While warming his clothes by a bonfire, most of his apparel burned with the exception of his undergarments. As the group returned to Springfield by rail, it was decided to crowd around this poor fellow and shield him from view as they exited the train. Once on the platform in Springfield, and amid the crowd of fellow passengers, on a given signal the members dis-



persed leaving him in "an unprotected state for all and sundry to gaze upon" as the article reads.

Mr. E.C. Taylor, chairman of the 1931 reunion, called several old timers to the head table to reward them for their many years of service to the club. Among the awards were the Beau Brummel medal, the Paddle Breaker, and one for excellence as Club Scavenger willing to eat any and all leftovers. One prominent businessman was honored with the final reward for his excellent taste in girl friends and his dependability as a dating agency for fellow members. I'm happy to say that, as the years progressed, we have not lost that spirit, sense of humor and ability to not take ourselves too seriously.

On the night of, January 16, 1935, an alleged spark from a passing train burned the clubhouse down. A decision was made to build a new clubhouse at a different site due to the close proximity to the railroad tracks, sewage disposal outlets and several industrial plants at the original Springfield location. Land was purchased in Agawam on River Road near the South End Bridge where the club now stands. Local builder Joseph Chapdelaine built the new clubhouse for about \$7,000.

Membership began to grow until WWII. The war put a damper on club activities and a Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla was formed at the clubhouse. Today the clubhouse is used not only for club functions but also by local groups for educational programs. Regularly the local police, fire, Power Squadron, Department of Environmental Protection, watershed groups and other civic organizations use our meeting room for seminars and classes in the public interest.

With membership down to a mere 25 due to poor water conditions, a loss of water depth thanks to the deterioration of the Enfield dam and the imminent closing of the Windsor Locks (CT) canal, in 1964 the club leased land in Chester, CT and a second location was built for the larger boats. The purchase price of

\$30,000 was staggering so a lease-purchase agreement with the owner, Mr. Monty, was negotiated. Members could, until 1965, sail their boats from the clubhouse, downriver through the canal to the Sound. The canal was closed permanently and a last passage was made north to the clubhouse for winter storage.

The Chester property had the bare essentials needed to develop a usable marina. But, thanks to the hard work and considerable talent of a group of dedicated members, a Springfield Yacht and Canoe Club marina now exists on Chester creek with land that also faces the Connecticut River and has direct access to Long Island Sound. Currently there are 40+ larger powerboats in Chester. Improvements to the property over the years included new docks with water and electricity, a pavilion, shower facilities and beautiful landscaping. In 2000 another dredging and widening of the basin was completed at a cost well into six-figures. This major project was viewed by the membership as yet another way to enhance the value of our properties.

Being a member-owned club we all benefit from any improvements. Further, with the construction of our new private launching ramp in Chester, the basin now offers members with smaller, trailerable boats an opportunity to use this terrific facility. In 1977 the property was paid off and a mortgage burning ceremony was held. The last paragraph of the ceremony's speech, delivered by then Commodore Neal Hamilton, sums it up well. "We can not celebrate this mortgage burning without thanking the many members who have given so unselfishly of their time and labors. This basin is what it is today because of its members who have every right to be proud of their accomplishments."

The Chester acquisition led to an eventual increase in membership. Currently the club is limited to 150 members divided between both locations. During the summer of 1999 several members paddled canoes and kayaks from the Agawam clubhouse to Chester camping along the way showing the spirit of the old Canoe Club is still alive and well after 150 years. On Tuesday evenings the sailboat racing tradition also continues.

The Connecticut River's water quality has increased dramatically over the past few years. Now people regularly swim in and water ski on the river. Weekends find people camping and spending the day on one of the small islands on our local stretch of the river. In 1999 the Connecticut River was named an American Heritage River. This designation paves the way for money to improve the river, its banks and begin recreational development with a lot less (governmental) red tape. Only ten rivers in America were given this honor.

Bald eagles nest near its banks and feed on the fish. Several other species of birds and animals also call the Connecticut River home thanks to the dramatic increase in the quality of the water. And, the fishing is terrific! Still, the breaches in the Enfield dam subject boaters to dangerously low water levels north of the dam through Springfield during certain parts of the year. If the dam were restored to its original height and provisions were made for migrating fish this problem would be eliminated and more people would be able to use the river safely.

Membership in the SYCC is only \$150 per year. There are no employees and every



member is expected to lend a hand at each of the two work parties in the spring and fall at both locations. Additionally, any construction work to be done around the marinas is usually performed by the members. As an example, we need to replace all the windows in the Agawam clubhouse. One of our members is a building material wholesaler. He gave us a price of \$200 per window and another member suggested that, rather than take the money out of the treasury, we could allow members to each purchase a window for the club. The response was overwhelming and, at a recent meeting, all the windows sold out.

The club participates in community events like the Lucky Duck Race and fishing tournaments to benefit area charities and offers its private launching ramp and docks to local police, fire and emergency services for rescue and training. Members come from all walks of life and varied professions. Boats range from kayaks to canoes, rowing shells, fishing boats, small outboard powered pleasure boats and sailing craft up to 40'+ motor yachts. There is a Commodore, Jack Cavallon, and several officers plus a Board of Directors all elected each year by the membership to oversee the club's operation and finances. Additionally, several committees take on tasks relating to the day-to-day operation, maintenance and activities.

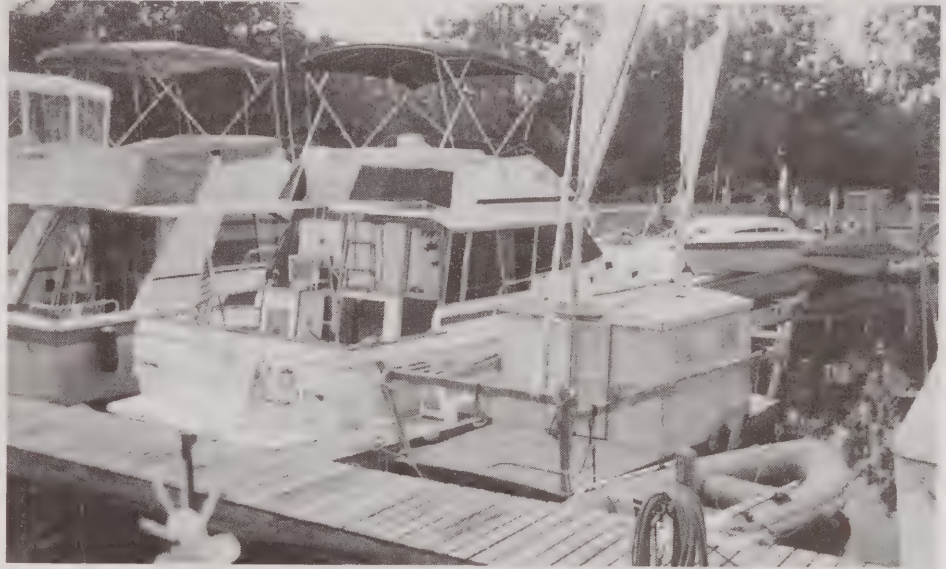
This is a working club... That's why the membership costs and mooring/dock fees are so low in comparison to other yacht clubs and private marinas. This, along with people who love boating, the fellowship of other boating families and any excuse for having a party or event is what makes this club continue to be a success. We have several multi-generational member families consisting of parents, children and grand children.

The 150th Celebration weekend will begin with a cocktail party at the Agawam club-

The Yacht Club in 1998.

house Saturday night June 3rd. Local dignitaries, public officials and invited guests will be treated to a catered reception (again as a working club one of our members, Chef Hubie Gottschlicht from the Student Prince restaurant, will be providing his usual expertise in the kitchen). As the evening progresses a silent auction and river cruises will be offered. For some of the local officials this may be the first time they have seen their city from the river. Memorabilia and photographs will be on display throughout the evening. The next day will be an open house. Radio, TV and newspaper coverage leading up to the event will invite area residents to visit the yacht club. Many people who live in the surround-

ing towns drive by our facility daily. On June 4th we will invite them in to see what we are all about. Kid's games, vendors, demonstrations of power and sail boats, kayaks, rowing shells and canoes plus fishing techniques from bass pros will be part of the day's activities. Raffles will offer some great prizes. In addition to our celebrating 150 years of continuous operation, the proceeds will benefit Baystate Medical Center and their local community activities. As one of the oldest yacht clubs in the United States we have a rich local history and we look forward to promoting safe family boating, water sports activities, environmental conservation and community involvement long into the future.



The *Restless*, a flat-bottomed raft that was sailed, poled, and rowed the entire length of the Connecticut River from New Hampshire to Long Island Sound. Crewed by Turk Leebaert and his two sons, Corky (13) and Timmy-Bruce (9) during the summer of 1999. The *Restless* is docked overnight at the SYCC facility in Chester, CT>





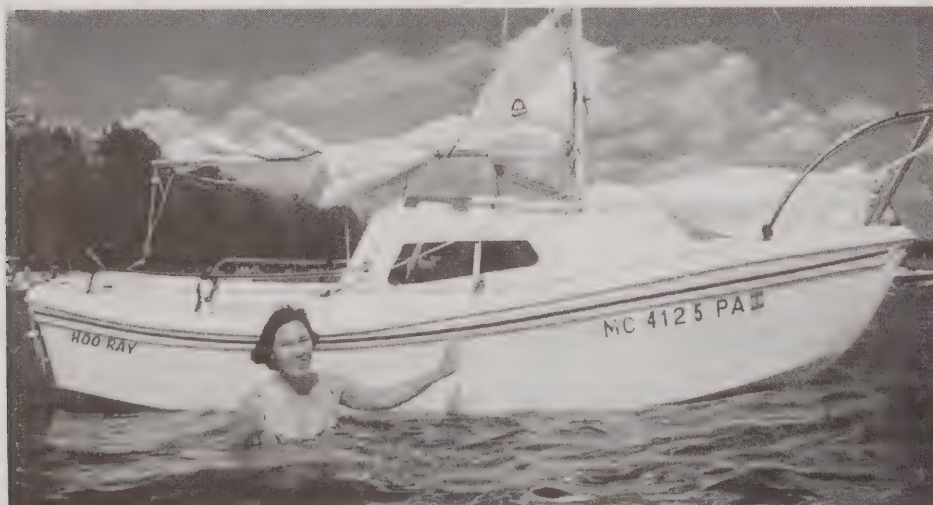


Underway: From left are Otto Suchland in his P-15, *So Small*; Jack Wainio in his P-15, *Bobber*; Judy and Evans Hollandworth in their P-19; and Tom Grimes in his P-14, *Far Horizon*.



Tom Grimes setting up his gaff rigged P-14, *Far Horizon*. This boat was a basket case when Tom bought her.

Momma Maxine, 1st Mate, with our P-15 *Hooray*.



## Midwest Potter Sail

By John Marotzke

The Muncie Sailing Club of Muncie, Indiana, hosted our Midwest Potter Sail last May 14, 15 & 16th. The weather was great, low to mid 70s. Winds on Saturday were 10-18mph with Sunday at 10-12mph. I was told that there isn't any place to even sail a frisbee in Indiana. Well I am here to tell you that Prairie Creek Lake near Muncie, Indiana is great. When was the last time you went sailing for three days and never saw or heard a PWC? Even better, when was the last time you sailed and didn't have large waves from powerboats to contend with. The lake has a 10mph speed limit. In fact you see very few homes or cottages on the shore, just like way up north. The sailing club has slips for about 150 boats for their members. The lake is over four miles long and about a mile wide. We had five P-15s and two P-19s all sailing together at the same time.

Mike White of Noblesville came by and wished he had gotten his P-19 ready in time. Maybe next time. All was not at a loss as we went for a sail in my *Hooray*. Janet and Jerry Hartman of Tipton, Indiana stopped by. They now sail a Sea Pearl, but being past owners of a P-15 and a P-19, they just couldn't stay away. Rumor is that they will have another P-15 in the near future. I took Jerry out for a fun ride.

My wife and first mate Maxine and I would like to thank everyone who came. This is a great way for enjoying real quality time together, and for meeting others with a shared interest. I am sure we all learned something that we didn't know before about sailing our Potters.

The Potter which came the farthest was the P-19 Karen and Perry Tomasetti brought, along with their two sons, a two year old and a 6 month old baby, from Elmwood Park, Illinois. Yes they slept on the boat. You know, rock-a-by-baby....







Judy Hollandworth of Muncie, Indiana on the beautiful green P-19 that she and husband Evans bought last year. They were our hosts for the sail along with Tom Grimes. For more good stuff on P-19s, check out Judy's page. <http://hometown.aol.com/jblumhorst/HomePage/index.htm>



Janet & John Ulmer of Canal Fulton, Ohio with their P-14 that they have sailed for more than 20 years.

Otto Suchland of Lansing, Michigan sailing the famous P-15 *So Small*. He is the second owner. *So Small* is the boat that Judson Abbott sailed on Lake Michigan to South Manitou Island when he had to be picked up by the Coast Guard after being swamped in a big storm (see article in *Small Boat Journal* #57 October/November 1987). What a feeling to be in the presence of such a boat. To read the story go to <http://home.worldnet.att.net/~e.zeiser/sailin/sosmall.htm>



Jack Wainio came from Wellington, Ohio with his new (to him) P-15, *Bobber*. I think Jack is the 3rd or 4th owner. It is his first Potter, but not his first sail boat.



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In October and November I was a guest artist at the Gammel Dok Pakhus in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Old Docks Warehouse was built in the early nineteenth century. The warehouses and buildings surrounding the site date from the seventeenth century when much of this part of Kobenhavn was developed as part of a vast plan to improve the defenses and commercial viability of a then extremely rich and powerful trading city. Along one of Copenhagen's oldest commercial canals is a building with the double helix of four entwined dragons' tails, the western world's first open floor stock market.

My studio and closeby apartment looked out onto the inner harbor as well as the Christhavn canal complex. As an avid sailor and owner of a Bud McIntosh built gaff sloop kept in East Boston, Massachusetts, living in Copenhagen was like dying and going to heaven. The canals on my side of the harbor were the mooring points for dozens of boats, ranging from iron coal barges converted to architectural offices to old wooden Baltic trawlers awaiting conversion to more pleasurable pursuits or just offering a quiet place to have a beer or two.

While Nyhavn, a historic canal adjacent to the ferry terminals for Sweden and Norway, is more famous for its collection of North Sea trading schooners, the back waters of

## Along the Copenhagen Docks

By John Powell

Christhana offered an endless variety of everyday pleasure craft. It seemed like every turn or open space revealed another tiny fishing boat or sailing smack.

The canal the boats pictured are moored in is the Christianshavn Canal, which is in the Christianshavn section of Copenhagen. This part of Copenhagen is new land from the 17th and 18th centuries. The area was initially developed for naval use, Denmark traditionally laying up the fleet for the winter months. The last time this was done was the beginning of the nineteenth century when Nelson of Trafalgar fame burnt the Danish fleet before it could be fitted out and put to sea. He also bombarded and burnt a good portion of Copenhagen, this because the Danish king was reluctant to make a choice between Napoleon and the English and their Prussian allies. The Orlogsmuseet (naval museum) has a wonder-

ful patriotic painting of fashionably dressed Danish men running down to the docks to launch the fleet as Nelson's ships are sighted in the roads.

Some remnants of the 18th century naval works still exist, notably the sheer crane, a striking almost medieval appearing structure of brick and timber close to seven stories high. Many of the light ships that were moored along the long and complex coast of Denmark are scattered around the harbor, in use as restaurants, private clubs and even a theatre of dubious repute. Wandering late at night and lost in thought in a dank and misty city I've had more than one start stumbling over apparently hemp hawsers mooring a very real beaked bowed oak hulk to an up ended cast iron cannon set in Belgian blocked paving. Time for a glass of Gammel Dansk (old cane).

The large schooner in the photos is used for excursions and is an early twentieth century coastal freighter. These ships were very common and a number of well known authors (Villiers, Conrad) started their careers on similar ships. There is still an active fleet of small coastal motor ships, sort of a home grown tramp fleet, although, this being Denmark, everything is very shipshape. The schooner is moored near one of the brick warehouses from the 18th century that used to line the harbour front.











## My Summer As a Deck Hand

By Johnny Robinson

Nearing the end of a busy freshman year at Roanoke College, final exams loomed. After the dust cleared from the flurry of activity and concentration of energy in those final days, I pondered my plans for the summer break. I had none. Perhaps I would paint a barn or a house like I had done in previous summers; maybe I'd take a long trip after I first made a little money.

A day or two after I found out that I had indeed passed all my exams, and with a comfortable margin at that, I got a phone call from my friend George. He said that there was good work available for me if I was interested; a large, sea-going ship had damaged the Benjamin Harrison bridge near Hopewell, Virginia on the James River. It was anticipated that the bridge would be out of commission for at least six months while repairs were being made. In the meantime, a ferry operation was being put together to serve the vehicle traffic crossing that part of the James. Some deck hands were needed, and the pay was good, three bucks an hour, which was fine for summer work in 1978. George knew the boss of the operation, and he had already signed up to work for the summer.

I accepted the offer immediately, and two days later I was driving to Hopewell, which is east of Richmond, near the terminus of large ship navigation on the James River.

From the moment I first reported for work on that bright June morning, I knew that I was going to be a part of a most unique operation. In securing a contract with the Commonwealth of Virginia, an entrepreneurial outfit from out-of-state had landed the job of providing ferry service for the duration of the bridge repair operation.

The whole thing had been thrown together rather hastily, the basic system consisting of the following: An extremely plain, utilitarian barge approximately seventy by twenty-five feet, welded of steel plate, had been constructed. This crude primer-colored hull possessed about three feet of freeboard, and chain-link fencing about four feet high ran down the sides, a few chains stretched across the otherwise open ends. Also, at each end of the barge there was a ramp of 1/4" steel plate, measuring about fifteen by seven feet, attached with

crude hinges. These ramps could be raised and lowered using a makeshift system of cables led amidships to a drum and wheel affair, which was mounted to a welder's nightmare of thick angle iron stock on the side deck. More about this diabolical unit later. Propulsion of this odd craft was supplied by a small ex-navy tug, made fast alongside the barge in such a way that it could pivot at the bow and swing around to reverse the direction of the ferry.

When I arrived at the wharf on that first day, I found out that actual ferry service had not yet begun due to various problems, so I was employed at rigging the aforementioned chain-link fencing. Also, I found out that a second ferry was being completed, as the contract stipulated two of them in service concurrently. A few more days spent tying loose ends were required before we were ready, and just how ready we were was questioned throughout the summer. So began a most memorable time for me.

My days on board the ferry started at 06:00, and ended fourteen hours later, at 20:00. We deck hands wanted to work as much as possible, and Shelly, our pretty boss, allowed us to, with the understanding that no special "overtime pay" would be forthcoming. Heck, we were making \$3.00 per hour; who needed overtime? Typically, there were two, sometimes three, deck hands on board, plus the captain on the tug.

Our job as deck hands entailed many tasks, among them were securing the vessel at the ferry wharf, raising and lowering the steel ramps, and directing the vehicles to the proper position on deck. We also man-handled the heavy and unwieldy wooden accessory ramps, which were found to be necessary if we desired to load and off-load vehicles without losing various components of their undercarriages.

Once the ferry was loaded, the captain threw the little tug into reverse and into the narrow channel we churned. Upon reaching relatively open water, we managed the lines as the captain pivoted the tug around on her nose. In this way, we avoided the necessity of turning the barge around for each run across the river; it being hard enough to keep the vessels from running aground anyway.

As the summer progressed, our bodies became bronzed and muscular. We learned to artfully toss the lines from the barge to the tug as she swung around, and to secure the lines to the twelve-inch cleats with a flourish of a few deft movements. Indeed, we attempted to show off to any young impressionable female who happened along.

One thing kept us in check, however, and that was the grumpy, barking, and generally intimidating presence of Capt. Claude. A frustrated military man and social misfit, he was a big fellow with wild hair and a permanent scowl on his weather-beaten face. When he barked, no, boomed, an order, we were compelled to act, rather explosively, even as we were settling into impressing some adolescent female on the fifteen-minute river crossing. Such was the Captain's effect; instilling a certain amount of fear in all of us deck hands.

The only time I saw a glimmer of brightening to his visage was when he offered me a sip from the jar of his homemade peach brandy. Thinking that I should take advantage of this uncharacteristic charm of the Capt., perhaps over optimistically as a step toward friendship with the beast, I took a swig. The clear and volatile liquid burned a path down my throat, and effectively prevented my speech for a painful few moments. Finally, I hissed out something like, "wow!" It was all too obvious to my "friend", the Capt. that I was a mere college student pansy from a sheltered background. Nevertheless, my display of hissing, complemented by my hands grasping at my neck, almost brought a smile to old Capt. Claude, and after that incident, he was much less vociferous to me than he was to the other deck hands.

Cap'n Ron was another one of the tug captains with whom I worked regularly. Everyone liked Cap'n Ron, a slightly-built, good natured guy who constantly clutched a coffee mug and sported a cigarette perpetually dangling precariously from his lips. Ron had roamed the ports of the Eastern seaboard for years, but had grown up on Long Island Sound and still possessed what I thought at the time to be a most unusual accent. Sometimes it was hard to understand the Cap'n when he started talking quickly, excitedly telling me about something, that cigarette dancing on his lips and blurring his words.

Cap'n Ron had great enthusiasm for anything related to boats and life on the water. I often found myself sitting on the rail of the tug adjacent to the open door of the pilothouse on the river crossings, listening to Ron extolling the virtues and attributes of various designs of sailing vessels. He planned, when he finished his stint as ferry captain, to head to coastal North Carolina to run a boatyard, where he planned to produce a version of the Barnegat Bay catboat, a vessel with which he was particularly enamored. I lost touch with Cap'n Ron after that summer, although I think about him from time to time. I hope he got to build his catboats.

There was seldom a dull moment on board the ferry. Once, another one of the deck hands, Chuck, was slowly lowering the steel ramp as we approached the landing, a bit prematurely it seemed. Chuck was the son of one of the ferry company's owners, and didn't seem to be sailing with a full load of ballast, shall we say, so we always kept an eye on Ol' Chuck. Chuck was lowering the ramp, using the big two-foot diameter steel wheel which I



described earlier. He had his endearing "no-body home" look on his face, and I started moving toward him from across the barge, sensing impending doom. Just as I was about to yell, "stop lowering the ramp, Chuck!", the big wheel instantly began spinning in a high-speed blur, throwing Chuck to the side unharmed. A few seconds later, a loud wrenching wump sound emanated from the big steel ramp, and then relative silence.

Turns out that Ol' Chuck had lowered that ramp right down into the water while we were still traveling at ten knots or so. The force of the ramp hitting the water at this speed caused it to, in a few seconds, bend completely under the bow of the barge and rip completely off. Nobody was hurt, but what followed was most unpleasant, as Capt. Claude, now breathing fire, had to maneuver the ferry around backwards, and we had to back the vehicles off the barge from the end that they were loaded from, where a ramp, thankfully, was still attached.

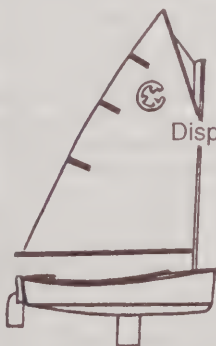
A day later, a diver hired by the ferry outfit, located the wayward ramp on the mud bottom in ten feet of coffee-colored water. A rushed welding job later, we were back up to speed.



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The summer went by in a blur, colorful episodes blending into others. One morning, as the dawn sky lightened, I arrived at the ferry landing to see Cap'n Claude and Bill staring down into the black water next to the ferry. It occurred to me that the spot they were peering into was usually occupied by the tug, and sure enough, upon closer inspection, I noted the tug's rust-streaked stack emerging from the water. I quickly accessed my memory bank to determine if I could in any way be connected in a causative way to this mishap. Finding none, I hung around to watch the proceedings. It was an interesting day; a day in which things such as a salvage crane, cables, pumps, and cussing stand out in my memory.

The water of the James there really was coffee-colored, thanks to the industrial "progress" in the area. My fellow crew members and I never once considered swimming in the filthy water all that hot summer. At the ferry landing on the south side of the river, however, there was a local character of the canine variety who swam practically every day. We called the big, scarred black lab "Black Dog", and his claim to fame was his enthusiastic diving ability.

"Black Dog" would horse around with us during the occasional slow time between runs, and would often carry a rock in his mouth for us to toss into the water for him to retrieve. These were big rocks, five or ten pounds, and it never ceased to amaze us to see him leap into the eight-foot deep water, disappear for a while and surface again with the rock in his mouth. Sometimes it was a different rock, but he never came up empty-mouthed. As a future dentist, I was fascinated with the way "Black Dog" had worn his teeth down to nubs from his unusual hobby.

The days were long, and I was always rather beat by day's end. At quitting time, the rest of the crew quickly made themselves scarce and I was left alone to contemplate the quiet magic of the summer twilight. I usually camped out of my Volkswagen bus, which I parked right there at the ferry landing. In the fading light, with the heat of the day dissipating, I would sit in the open side door of the bus and eat my dinner of canned beans and fruit cocktail, reminiscing about the day's events, and dreaming of adventures to come. The realization was not lost upon me that life was good... very good!



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I was past the most northerly point of my trip by now. I noticed each morning that the sunrise had moved from the right of my bow to the left. Geographically, I was going down to the Gaspé now. One more overnight in Anse-a-Valleau, where I was invited to a scrumptious chicken dinner by Jean-Yves and Rachel. I was getting apprehensive about rounding the Cape. The weather reports were only in French, and not having accurate weather and tide information made me very nervous. I had asked Jean-Yves whether he could get them for me, and he did, plus giving me lots of other information about the Forillon National Park at its tip. Thanks, Jean-Yves.

With more confidence, I was headed for Cap de Rosier the next morning, where I wanted to hole up before rounding the "baddest point of them all". But since I did not find a harbor, ramp or even beach where I could take out, I was drawn by the lure of the lighthouse on its point, and there it was, Cap Gaspé in the distance, a sheer rock face, a formidable looking, long black silhouette with the sun behind it. Awesome. I poked my boat around the light-house point, because sometimes it is easier to go ahead in the waves than turn and head back. I looked around the corner and saw what looked like a breakwater with some buildings, maybe even a small harbor, about three miles down the coast, and I was going for it.

I was real excited to have made it that far having the Cape within sight. I made it fine to the harbor, found a small tidal arm to the right with a dock and some level grass beside it. How perfect can it get? Just to make sure, I went to the park check-in station to tell them what I was doing. I soon regretted my honesty because I was met with almost hostile inflexibility. "No camping except on assigned sites." OK, I thought, gimme your closest site, but remember, I come by boat and not by car. It was absurd, and even the supervisor was not willing to make an exception for a boater who had come 750 miles to round the Cape.

I was not willing to take out about a mile and a half down the way on a rocky beach with waves breaking on it, then find a small foot-path and portage my gear a good 1/4 of a mile to site #87 on B loop (or was it #285 on C?). Frankly, my dear... I filled out a "comment sheet", using the word discrimination, which always gets everybody's attention, but also

Cape Gaspé, "the end of the world."

## Paddling 'Round The Gaspé Peninsula

### Part III

By Reinhard Zollitsch

made a positive suggestion to address the new problem of sea-kayakers and canoeists and establish a specific area for them to put up their minimal tents since the park was blocking out about 20 miles of coast line. Assigning them a place to camp near the water makes more sense than chasing them off the rocky beaches around the points, which small boaters are forced to do with the present policy in place. All to no avail.

I got back in the boat, not knowing what I was going to do. Backtracking five or more miles did not appeal to me. So I talked to the skipper and two crew of the tour boat which was to leave soon. No problem, they assured me. There is no wind out there, promise. And I fell for it, because I wanted to believe it. I had paddled only 6-1/2 hours today. I could do it, I thought hopefully and still somewhat upset.

It went beautifully all the way to the point. The mountains, the end of the newly established International Appalachian Trail, were dropping straight down to the water, I guess 500 feet. Gray seals were everywhere. The tide was still going out until 4pm. I took pictures, I felt great, until I got to the point. Then suddenly all hell broke loose. Suddenly there was wind being funneled around the point, first right on my nose, then more and more on my left beam as I turned the corner, and then more aft.

A tidal rip not more than 100' offshore forced me to claw my way real close around one point after the other, one ledge after the next. I was working hard, making minimal progress and was seriously doubting my decision to round the cape at this point. Waves were breaking, and I was dancing, bracing, sprinting and bracing again, but I hung in there and made it. The tourboat had also rounded the point and was putting its bow under, making it a very wet ride for those on the open deck. It was also ebbing out of the 20 mile long Bay of Gaspé and the wind was building out of the south. I had no rest until I got to the tiny har-

bor of Grande Grave, where I simply gave up. I was spent after 10-3/4 hours in the boat. It had taken me three extra hours to cover the 11 miles around the point.

But then standing on terra firma again, everything was suddenly calm and surreal. It was Saturday, and lots of people had gathered in the harbor, to picnic, fish, look, hike, go sea-kayaking or whale-watching. I had decided to stay here, park-ranger or not. They would not find me, and they didn't. Instead I met a lot of friendly people wanting to hear about my venture, kids who had never seen a boat like mine, a bent-shaft carbon fiber paddle, tent, self-inflatable sleeping pad or chair like my Crazy-Creek chair. Kids and parents tried out everything of mine, including my sleeping bag. It was fun. In return they came by later offering me food and drink and assured me they would not tell the ranger but rather approved of my illegal action. It was heart-warming. A wonderful sunset out my tent door crowned an otherwise very taxing day.

From here up the bay into the harbor of Gaspé the next morning was a trip full of history for me. In 1534 Jacques Cartier sailed up this bay, and made Gaspé harbor one of the first land-falls in the New World. From the Straits of Belle Isle between Newfoundland and Labrador he circled around the Gulf of St. Lawrence, going down the west coast of Newfoundland, touching on the Madeleine Islands, Prince Edward Island, Miscou Island in New Brunswick, into the Chaleur Bay, where he briefly stopped in Port Daniel and then in Gaspé, always looking for a seaway to China. After rounding the Gaspé he went across to Anticosti Island, missing the St. Lawrence completely, thinking it was just another big bay, and eventually drifted back to Belle Isle.

It was a long quiet hitch up the bay to the long low sandspit arcing out from the left shore making Gaspé a perfect natural harbor. I imagined Cartier rounding the point, dropping anchor off the sandy beach on the inside of this crescent peninsula, and checking things out. Maybe going ashore for some birds' eggs, doing some fishing, repairing or cleaning the boats and most importantly, finding out who lives along its shores.

It was Sunday; the churchbells rang as I stepped ashore, it was an awesome moment in time.

After lunch I headed down the bay again on the western shore where I wanted to stop just before the next big point, St. Pierre Point. I was back to my old plan, exposed points are best rounded in the relatively calm early hours. I learned my lesson the day before, rounding the Gaspé. Impatience does not pay.

And I found the perfect little hide-away, a tiny harbor near Cap-du Bois Brulé, where I nestled my tent and boat between old hauled-out fishing boats. I felt very alone there, until who should appear, but my three Connecticut sailor friends who had spent the previous night in Gaspé. But that was the last time I saw them, even though we were both headed towards Campbellton. Fog and head-winds must have slowed them more than me.

The next day was spectacular. St. Pierre point was impressive, but even more impressive was the view from there across Malbaie Bay towards Percé Rock and Bonaventure Island with the spectacular mountain range to the right of "The Rock". The sea was calm, but fog was drifting in from the ocean, slowly





but surely enveloping Bonaventure, then creeping up on Percé Rock. Crossing over to the Rock took a good 1-1/2 hrs, which gave me ample time to admire this gigantic boulder. It looks like the "Prudential Rock". It has sheer sides and a most enticing arch at the eastern end of it.

Since the tide was low, I had to go around it, which I had wanted to do anyway. And when I came to the arch, I felt very tempted to thread the eye of the needle. It was shallow under the arch with lots of chunky rocks, loose ones, that did not grow there, but must have fallen from above. I sized up the situation, then kicked up my rudder, and paddled hard and went for it. The wind had freshened and was pressing hard through the arch. I scraped a bit here and there, but it was worth it. I had always wanted to do it, even back in 1963. So now I did it, and the rocks decided to stay up where they belong.

While "The Rock" looked just the same as it did 36 years ago, the surroundings had changed drastically: there now was a dock with boat tours, rock and whale watching, a tourist information pavilion with stores etc. etc., the works. A quick phone call home, some unbelieving tourists from all over the world, even China, staring at my little boat and asking sweet, naive questions. A smile on my part and I was gone across the next big bay to Cap d'Espoir, Cape Hope. I liked that name (better than the English corruption of "Cape Despair"). I had paddled 28 miles today and had been in the boat for a total of 8-1/2 hrs. It was time to quit. I had earned my afternoon coffee, swim and reading. I also had read about Cartier having had trouble rounding this point, since it has a very long shallow bar extending far out into the bay. So I decided to tackle it in the morning.

The calm protected cove just before the point was quite different in the morning. The wind had shifted to the NE and the waves were breaking on my rocky beach. So it was one of those plan C launches again. Put the boat on rollers, pack it, then push it in the water on a big breaking wave, jump in and paddle like mad before I get smacked by the next breaking waves, which would not be too cool, because the spray skirt is not zipped shut.

So this is how this day, which turned out to be my worst day, began. When I tried to jump into the boat my sandal got stuck in the thick seaweed and almost tipped me and boat into the water when I tried to pull my leg in. But one big jerk freed it, but "sans sandale". I can't go on without sandals, I thought. So I beached my boat again. With one hand I tried to hold the boat into the waves and seaweed slop, while looking for my sandal in the goop. I found it, threw it in the boat, pushed, jumped, paddled all at the same time and threw my back out. The boat looked like a mess, I was wet, on half power and upset with myself that I let it happen with almost 200 miles still to go.

The point looked hopeful, some old swells coming in and breaking here and there, but nothing that I cannot handle, I thought. I kept a keen lookout for the big breaking waves, all is fine, until I suddenly see a humungous wave rolling very threateningly towards me, it builds from over my left shoulder. Oh no! I yell, and steer and paddle as fast as I can right into it, and then it hits, hits me right in the chest and my face, but the boat punches through the white water. I reach over the break with my paddle and dig in deep on the other side of the wave. Phew, that was close, and I



Tucked away in a small harbor across from Cape Gaspé.



Percé from St. Pierre Pt.

Percé Rock.



am wet again, wet down to my underwear which I had just changed this morning.

Later that morning with the waves still trying to pass me from behind, I suddenly notice a big black round torpedo-like thing with its own bow wave like a submarine or torpedo aiming right for me. Had I drifted into another target practice range like on Lac St. Pierre? I sprint, the "thing" is still aiming right for me. My heart-beat races. What now? Brace for impact! Which I did, slapping my paddle on the water like an outrigger, waiting for the inevitable to happen. But nothing happened. I look all around, nothing.

Then I see a huge seal behind me looking at me dumbfoundedly with its big eyes. He must have been surfing this wave for quite some time, just for fun, and suddenly saw or heard me slap down my paddle. I was so glad he could stop on a dime, because I could

clearly see him just feet from my boat. Reading up on those seals in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, I learned they are gray seals, growing up to 9' long and weighing as much as 650lbs. Colliding with one of them would have most likely flipped me. Not a pretty picture.

Then the wind picked up coming at me over my left bow and I was dancing again, barely making it around the breakwater into Chandler harbor where I saw a shipwreck, a big Panamanian freighter high and dry on a ledge. Not a friendly sight. I had planned to round two more points and make it to Newport, but I simply did not have the heart and stamina today to go on, so I didn't, and pulled out on a long sand beach in the inner harbor. I even indulged myself and ate out at the Chandler Marina just up the beach, the first and only meal out on this trip.

(To Be Concluded)



I had heard the story before. It had been told me by the river boatmen, and the newspapers of the country had also repeated it. The common version of it was, that a poor man, desirous of supporting his large family of children, had undertaken to row on a bet from Philadelphia to New Orleans. If successful, he was to receive five thousand dollars. The kind-hearted people along the river had shown much sympathy for Mr. John C. Cloud in his praiseworthy attempts to support his suffering family, and at any time during his voyage quite a liberal sum of money might have been collected from these generous men and women to aid him in his endeavor. There was, however, something he preferred to money, and with which he was lavishly supplied, as we shall see hereafter.

So much for rumor. Now let us examine facts. A short time before Mr. Cloud's death, two reporters of a western paper attempted to row to New Orleans in a small boat, but met with an untimely end, being run down by a steamboat. Their fate and Mr. Cloud's were quoted as precedents to all canoeists and boatmen, and quite a feeling against this healthful exercise was growing among the people. Several editors of popular newspapers added to the excitement by warnings and forebodings. Believing that some imprudence had been the cause of Mr. Cloud's death, and forming my opinion of him from the fact of his undertaking such a voyage in August,—the season when the swamps are full of malaria,—I took the trouble to investigate the case, and made some discoveries which would have startled the sympathetic friends of this unfortunate man.

One of the first things that came to light was the fact that Mr. Cloud was not a married man. His family was a creation of his imagination, and a most successful means of securing the sympathy and ready aid of those he met during his voyage, though his daily progress shows that neither sympathy nor money were what he craved, but that WHISKEY alone would "fill the bill!"

Mr. Cloud had once been a sailor in the United States navy, but having retired from the cruel sea, he became an actor in such plays as "Black-eyed Susan" in one of the variety theatres in Philadelphia. Mr. Charles D. Jones, of that city, who was connected with theatrical enterprises, and knew Mr. Cloud well, was one day surprised by the latter gentleman, who declared he had a "bright idea," and only wanted a friend to stand by him to make it a sure thing. He proposed to row from Philadelphia to New Orleans in a small boat. Mr. Jones was to act as his travelling agent, going on in advance, and informing the people of the coming of the great oarsman. When Mr. Cloud should arrive in any populous river-town, a theatrical performance was to be given, the boatman of course to be the "star." Mr. Jones was to furnish the capital for all this, while Mr. Cloud was to share with his manager the profits of the exhibitions.

A light Delaware River skiff, pointed at each end, was purchased, and Mr. Cloud left Philadelphia in the month of August, promising his friend to arrive in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in twelve or fourteen days. After waiting a few days to enable Mr. Cloud to get fairly started upon his voyage, which was to be made principally by canals to the Alleghany River, the manager went to Pittsburgh with letters of introduction to the editors of that busy city.



## Four Months In a Sneak-Box

By Nathaniel H. Bishop, 1879  
(1837-1902)

### Chapter 7 - Part II Descent of the Mississippi to New Orleans

#### How to Civilize Chinese — A Swim of One Hundred and Twenty Miles on the Mississippi — Twenty-four Hours in the Water — Arrival in the Crescent City

The representatives of the press kindly seconded Mr. Jones in advertising the coming of the great oarsman. Mr. Cloud was expected to appear in front of Pittsburgh on a certain day. A hall was engaged for his performance in the evening. An immense amount of enthusiasm was worked up among the people of the city and the neighboring towns. Having done his duty to his colleague, Mr. Jones anxiously awaited the expected telegram from Cloud, announcing his approach to the city. No word came from the oarsman; and in vain the manager telegraphed to the various towns along the route through which Mr. Cloud must have passed.

On the day that had been settled upon for the arrival of the boat before Pittsburgh, a large concourse of visitors gathered along the riverbanks. Even the mayor of the city was present in his carriage among the expectant crowd. The clock struck the hour of noon, but the little Delaware skiff was nowhere to be seen; and, as the sun declined from the zenith, the people gradually dispersed, muttering, "Another humbug!"

At midnight Mr. Jones retired in anything but an amiable mood. His professional honor had been wounded, and his industrious labors lost. Where was Cloud? Had the poor fellow been murdered? What was his fate, and why did he not come up to time? Revolving these questions in his mind, the manager fell asleep; but he was roused before five o'clock in the morning by a servant knocking at his door to inform him that his "star" was in Alleghany City, opposite Pittsburgh. Mr. Jones went to look up his man, and found him in a state of

intoxication in a drinking-saloon. A hard-looking set of fellows were perambulating the streets, bawling at the top of their voices, "Arrival of John C. Cloud, the great oarsman! Photographs for sale! only twenty-five cents!"

When the intoxicated boatman had returned to a conversational state of mind, he explained that he had actually rowed as far as Harrisburgh, Pennsylvania, where he had been most generously entertained at the liquor saloons, and had been so fortunate as to make the acquaintance of some "good fellows" who had engaged to travel in advance of his boat, and sell his photographs, sharing with him in the profits of such sales. He had made his voyage from Harrisburgh to Alleghany City by rail, his boat being safely stowed in a car, and tenderly watched over by the red-shirted "good fellows" who had so generously taken him under their wing. The "great oarsman" had, in fact, rowed just about one-third of the distance between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

The disgusted manager left his man in charge of the new managers, and going at once to the editors, explained how he had been duped, and begged to be "let down gently" before the public. These gentlemen not only acceded to the request, but even offered to get up a "benefit" for Mr. Jones, who declined the honor, and waited only long enough in the city to see Mr. Cloud with his boat and whiskey fade out of sight down the Ohio, when he returned to Philadelphia considerably lighter in pocket, having provided funds for purchasing the boat and other necessities, and full of righteous indignation against Mr. Cloud and his "bright idea."

The little skiff went on its way down the Ohio, and was met with enthusiasm at each landing. The citizens of Hickman, Kentucky, described the voyage of Mr. Cloud as one continuous ovation. Five thousand people gathered along the banks below that town to welcome "the poor northern man who was rowing to New Orleans on a five-thousand-dollar bet, hoping to win his wager that he might have means to support his large family of children." One old gentleman seemed to have his doubts about the truth of this statement, "for," said he, "when the celebrated oarsman appeared, and landed, he repaired immediately to a low drinking-saloon, and announced that he was the greatest oarsman in America," &c.

The "boys" about the town subscribed a fund, and invested it in five gallons of whiskey, which Cloud took aboard his skiff when he departed. He plainly stated that the conditions of the bet prevented his sleeping under a roof while on his way; so he curled himself up in his blankets and slept on the veranda floors. The man must have had great powers of endurance, or he could not have rowed so long in the hot sun at that malarious season of the year. His chief sustenance was whiskey; and at one town, near Cairo, I was assured by the best authority, ten gallons of that fiery liquor were stowed away in his skiff. Such disregard of nature's laws soon told upon the plucky fellow, and his voyage came to an end when almost in sight of his goal. The malaria he was breathing and the whiskey he was drinking set fire to his blood, and the fatal congestive chills were the inevitable result.

The papers of New Orleans had announced the approach of the great oarsman, and the planters were ready to give him a cordial welcome, when one day a man who was walking near the shore of the Mississippi, in



the parish of Iberville, and looking out upon the river, saw a boat of a peculiar model whirling around in the eddies. He at once launched his boat and pushed out to the object which had excited his curiosity. Stretched upon the bottom of the strange craft was a man dressed in the garb of a northern boatman. At first he appeared to be dead; but a careful examination showed that life was not yet extinct. The unknown man was carried to the nearest plantation, and there, among strangers whose hearts beat kindly for the unfortunate boatman, John C. Cloud expired without uttering one word.

The coroner, Mr. Adonis Le Blanc, found upon the person of the dead man a memorandum-book which told of the distances made each day upon the river, while the entries of the closing days showed how the keeper of the log had suffered from the "heavy shakes" occasioned by the malaria and his own imprudence. The story of the cruise was recorded on the boat. Men and women had written their names inside the frail shell, with the dates of her arrival at different localities along the route. I afterwards examined the boat at Biloxi, on the Gulf of Mexico, where it was kept as a curiosity in the boat-house of a citizen of New Orleans.

They buried the unfortunate man upon the plantation, and Mr. Clay Gourrier took charge of his effects. The most remarkable thing about this rowing match was the credulity of the people along the route. They accepted Cloud's statement without stopping to consider that if there were any truth in it, the other side, with their five thousand dollars at stake, would surely take some interest in the matter, and have men posted along the route to see that the bet was fairly won. The fact that no bet had been made never seemed to dawn upon them; but, like too many, they sympathized without reasoning.

Being forced to abandon all hopes of taking the Bayou Manchac and the interesting country of the Acadians in my route southward, I rowed down the river, past the curious old town of Plaquemine, and by four o'clock in the afternoon commenced to search for an island or creek where a good camping-ground for Sunday might be found. The buildings of White Castle Plantation soon arose on the right bank, and as I approached the little cooper-age-shop of the large estate, which was near the water, a kindly hail came from the master-cooper and his assistant. Acceding to their desire "to look at the boat," I let the two men drag her ashore, and while they examined the craft, I studied the representatives of two very different types of laboring-men. One was from Madison, Indiana; the other belonged to the poor white class of the south. We built a fire near the boat, and passed half the night in conversation.

These men gave me much valuable information about Louisiana. The southern cooper had lived much among the bayous and swamps of that region of the state subjected to overflow. He was an original character, and never so happy as when living a Robinson Crusoe life in the woods. His favorite expression seemed to be, "Oh, shucks!" and his yarns were so interlarded with this exclamation, that in giving one of his stories I must ask the reader to imagine that expressive utterance about every other word. Affectionately hugging his knee, and generously expectorating as he made a transfer of his quid from one side of his

mouth to the other, he said:

"A fellow don't always want company in the woods. If you have a pardner, he ort to be jes like yourself, or you'll be sartin to fall out. I was riving out shingles and coopers' stock once with a pardner, and times got mighty hard, so we turned fishermen. There was some piles standing in Plaquemine Bayou, and the drift stuff collected round them and made a sort of little island. Me and Bill Bates went to work and rived out some lengths of cypress, and built a snug shanty on top of the piles. As it wasn't real estate we was on, nobody couldn't drive us off; so we fished for the Plaquemine folks.

"By-and-by a king-snake swimm'd over to our island, and tuck up his abode in a hole in a log. The cuss got kind of affectionate, and after a while crawled right into our hut to catch flies and other varmin. At last he got so tame he'd let me scratch his back. Then he tuck to our moss bed, and used up a considerable portion of his time there. Bill Bates hadn't the manners of a hog, and he kept a-droppin' hints to me, every few days, that he'd 'drap into that snake some night and squeeze the life out of him.' This made me mad, and I nat'rally tuck the snake's part, particularly as he would gobble up and crush the neck of every water-snake that cum ashore on our island. One thing led to another, till Bill Bates swore he'd kill my snake. Sez I to him, 'Billum,' (I always called him Billum when I MEANT BIZNESS,) 'ef you hurt a hair of the head of my snake, I'll hop on to you.' That settled our partnership. Bill Bates knowed what I meant, and he gathered up his traps and skedaddled.

"Then I went to New Orleans, and out to Lake Pontchartrain, to fish for market. A lot of cussed Chinese was in the bizness, and when they found COARSE fish in their nets, they'd kill 'em and heave 'em overboard. Now, no man's got a rite to waste anything, so we fishermen begun to pay sum attention to the opium-smokers in good earnest."

Here I interrupted the speaker to ask him if it would be safe for me to travel alone through the fishing-grounds of these Chinese.

"Oh, shucks! safe enuf now," he answered. "Once they was a bad set; but a change has cum over 'em—they're CIVILIZED now."

A vision of schools and earnest missionary work was before me while I asked HOW their civilization had been accomplished.

"Shucks! WE dun it—WE WHITE FISHERMEN civilized 'em," was the emphatic reply; "and not a bit too soon either, for the wasteful cusses got so bad they wasn't satisfied with chucking dead fish overboard, but would go on to the prairies, and after using the grass cabins we WHITE fishermen had built to go into in bad weather, the bloody furiners would burn them up to bother us. They thort they'd drive us teetotally out of the diggins; so we thort it was time to CIVILIZE 'em. We hid in the long grass fur a few nights and watched the cusses. One morning a Chinaman was found dead in a cabin. Pretty soon after, one or two others was found floatin' round loose, in the same way; and after that lesson or two the fellers got CIVILIZED; and you needn't fear goin' among 'em now, fur they're harmless as kittens. They don't kill coarse fish now fur the fun of it. Oh, shucks! there's nothin' like a little healthy CIVILIZATION fur Chinamen and Injuns. They both needs it, and, any way, this is a WHITE MAN'S country."

"And what of negroes?" I asked.

"Oh, the niggers is good enuf, ef you let 'em alone. The Carpet-baggers from up north has filled their heads with all kinds of stuff, so now they think, nat'rally enuf, that they ought to be office-holders, when they can't read or write no more than I can. I'd like to take a hand CIVILIZING some of them Carpet-baggers! They needs it more than the Chinamen or Injuns."

During part of the evening, Mr. Sewall, the nephew of the owner of the plantation, was with us round our camp-fire. We spoke of Longfellow's Evangeline, the bay-tree, and Atchafalaya River, which he assured me was slowly widening its current, and would in time, perhaps, become the main river of the basin, and finally deprive the Mississippi of a large portion of its waters. From his boyhood he had watched the falling in of the banks with the widening and increasing of the strength of the current of the Atchafalaya Bayou. Once it was impassable for steamers; but a little dredging opened the way, while the Mississippi and Red rivers had both contributed to its volume of water until it had deepened sufficiently for United States gunboats to ascend it during the late war. It follows the shortest course from the mouth of Red River to the Gulf of Mexico.

I left White Castle Plantation early on Monday morning, when I discovered a lot of fine sweet-potatoes stowed away in the hold of my boat. The northern cooper had purchased them during the night, and having too much delicacy to speak of his gift, secreted them in the boat. I fully appreciated this kind act, knowing it to be a mark of the poor man's sympathy for his northern countryman. The levee for miles was lined with negroes and white men gathering a harvest of firewood from the drift stuff. One old negro, catching sight of my boat, called out to his companion, "Randal, look at dat boat! De longer we libs, de mor you sees. What sort o' queer boat is she?"

Twenty miles below White Castle Plantation is the valuable sugar estate called Houmas, the property of General Wade Hampton and Colonel J. T. Preston. General Hampton does not reside upon his plantation, but makes Georgia his home. Beyond Houmas the parish of St. James skirts the river for twenty miles. Three miles back from the river, on the left side of the Mississippi, and fifty-five miles from New Orleans, is the little settlement of Grand Point, the place most famed in St. James for perique tobacco. The first settler who had the hardihood to enter these solitudes was named Maximilian Roussel. He purchased a small tract of land from the government, and in the year 1824 shouldered his axe and camping utensils, and started for his new domain. He soon built a hut, and at once began the laborious task of clearing his land, which was located in a dense cypress swamp, alive with wild beasts and alligators. A rough house was completed at the end of a year, and into it Roussel moved his family, consisting of a wife and four children. Here "he lived till he died," as it has been expressively said.

Octave and Louis, two of his sons, and both now grandfathers, still live on the old place, and are highly respected. Only a few years ago the old homestead echoed to the voices of five of Roussel's sons, with their families; but death has taken two, one has removed, and two only now remain to relate the history of the almost unimaginable hardships encountered by the old and hardy pioneer.



There are at present nineteen families in the settlement, and they are all engaged in the cultivation of perique tobacco. An average farm on Grant Point consists of eight acres, and the average yield of manufactured tobacco is four hundred pounds to the acre. These simple-hearted people seem to be very happy and content. They have no saloons or stores of any kind, but their place is well filled with a neat Catholic church and a substantial school-house. Every man, woman, and child is a devout Roman Catholic, and in their daily intercourse with each other the stranger among them hears a patois something like the French language. The whole of the land cultivated by these people would not make more than an average farm in the north, while compared with the vast sugar estates on every side of it the dimensions are infinitesimal.

Villages were now picturesquely grouped along the shores, the most conspicuous feature in each being the large Catholic church, showing the religious belief of the people. Curious little stores were perched behind the now high banks of the levee. The signs over the doors bore such inscriptions as, "The Red Store," "The White Store," "St. John's Store," "Poor Family Store," &c. Busy life was seen on every side, but here, as elsewhere in the south, men seemed always to have time to give a civil answer to any necessary inquiries.

Only a month after I had descended this part of the river, Captain Boyton, clothed in his famous swimming-suit, paddled his way down the current from Bayou Goula to New Orleans, a distance of one hundred miles. The incidents of this curious voyage are now a part of the river's history, and this seems the place for the brave captain to tell his story. He says:

"I arrived at Bayou Goula on the 'Bismarck,' about six o'clock on Thursday morning; and, after considerable delay, succeeded in obtaining quarters at the Buena Vista Hotel in that village. At that point I engaged the services of a colored man named Brown, to pilot me down the river. At ten o'clock I took a breakfast, consisting of five eggs, bread, and a glass of beer, and ate nothing else during the day. At five o'clock precisely I took to the water and began my trip down to the city of New Orleans—a trip which proved to be a much more arduous one than I had anticipated, in consequence of the want of buoyancy in the water, the terrible counter-currents, and the large amount of drift-wood. It was some time before I could master the difficulty about the drift-wood, and at one time I was so annoyed and bruised by the floating debris, that I became somewhat apprehensive about the success of my enterprise. In some of the strong eddies particularly the logs played such fantastic tricks, rolling over and over with their jagged limbs and again standing upon their ends, that I feared I must either be carried under, or have my dress stripped completely off. By constant watching, however, I was enabled to steer out of harm's way and to keep steadily moving down the stream.

"Above Donaldsonville I was met by a fleet of boats filled with spectators, who accompanied me down to that point, which I reached about eight o'clock in the evening. The town was illuminated, and the citizens tendered me a polite invitation to land and take supper; but of course I was obliged to decline, accepting in lieu a drink and a sandwich. Of the sandwich I ate only the bread.

"Below Donaldsonville I was caught in

the great eddy. It was about four o'clock in the morning when I got into it, and it was good daylight before I succeeded in getting out again into the down-stream current. It was a singular sensation, this going round and round over the same ground, so to speak, and for the life of me I could not understand how I seemed now and then to be passing the same plantation-houses and familiar landmarks. The skiff which accompanied me was also in the same predicament, sometimes pulling up and sometimes pulling down stream. I tried to guide myself by the north star, but before I was aware of it that luminary, which ought to have kept directly in my front, would pop up, as it were, behind me, and destroy all my calculations. When daylight came, however, and the fog lifted sufficiently, I was able to paddle out into the middle of the stream, and keep down it once again.

"Early in the morning, above Bonnet Carre, I asked several persons on shore for some coffee, but most of them seemed too much excited to attend to this pressing want of mine. At last a gentleman who spoke French got his wife to go and get me a cup of coffee, after drinking which I felt greatly refreshed. The sandwich and drink at Donaldsonville, and this cup of coffee next morning, were the only things in the shape of refreshments which I took during the twenty-four hours' voyage. At times I was almost certain I was being attacked by alligators, and thought I should have to use the knife with which I always go armed, but it only proved to be the annoying drift-wood in which I would become fearfully entangled. I only suffered from the cold in my feet. These I warmed, however, after the sun came out, by inflating the lower part of my dress, and holding them up out of the water.

"The banks all along the way were crowded with people to see me pass down. At one point, when I had allowed the air to escape from the lower part of my dress, and was going along rapidly, with nothing showing above water but my head and my paddle, I met a skiff, which contained a negro man and woman, who were crossing the river. The woman became fearfully alarmed, and her screams could have been heard for miles away. The man pulled for dear life, the woman in the stern acting the cockswain, and urging the boat forward in the funniest manner possible.

"While in the great eddy I drifted into an immense flock of ducks, and but for the noise made by those in the skiff I could easily have caught several of them, as they were not at all disturbed by my presence, but swam leisurely all about me.

"At the Red Church, the wind blowing up against the current kicked up a nasty sea, which gave me a great deal of trouble. By sinking down very low, however, and allowing only my head above water, and taking the shower-bath as it came upon me continuously, I was enabled to keep up my headway down stream. When at my best speed I easily kept ahead of the boats, going sometimes at the rate of seven miles an hour without difficulty.

"This feat was a much more arduous one than my trip across the English Channel. Then I only slept two hours, and was up again, feeling all right; but when this thing was over I slept all night, had a refreshing bath, and still suffered from fatigue, to say nothing of my swollen wrists and neck-glands."

Having finished his remarkable voyage successfully, Captain Boyton concluded that

his life-saving dress had been fully tested in America, and determined to rest on his laurels, and avoid Mississippi debris in future. In consequence of being caught in the eddy below Donaldsonville, this great swimmer estimated the distance he traversed from Bayou Goula to New Orleans as fully one hundred and twenty miles. [\*note]

About dusk I rowed into a grove of young willows, on the left bank of the river, on the Shepard Plantation. My boat was soon securely fastened to a tree, and having partaken of my frugal meal I retired. A comfortable night's rest was, however, out of the question, for the passing steamers tossed me about in a most unceremonious manner, seeming to me in my dreams to be chanting for their lullaby, "Rock-a-by baby on the tree-top." Indeed, the baby on the tree-top was in an enviable position compared with my kaleidoscopic movements among the swashy seas. Many visions were before me that night, of the numerous little sufferers who are daily slung backwards and forwards in those pernicious instruments of torture called cradles.

Memory brought also another picture I hoped it had been my good fortune to forget. It was a scene on the veranda of a country house. Five sisters, all pretty girls, whose grace and vivacity I had often admired, were there, each in her rocking-chair, and each swinging to and fro, as though perpetual motion had been discovered. Why must an American woman have a rocking-chair? In no other country in the world, excepting among the creoles of South America, is this awkward piece of furniture so popular. Burn the cradles and taboo the graceless rocking-chair, and our children will have steadier heads and our women learn the attractive grace of quiet ease.

The following day I struggled against head winds and swashy seas, until their combined forces proved too much for me, and succumbing as amiably as possible under the circumstances, the little white boat was run ashore on the Picou Plantation, where the coast was fortunately low. The rain and wind held me prisoner there until midnight, when, with a rising moon to cheer me, I forced a passage through the blockade of driftwood, and being once more on the river, waved an adieu to my last camp on the Mississippi.

I was now only thirty-seven miles from New Orleans. Rowing rapidly down the broad river, now shrouded in gloom, with the fleecy scuds flying overhead in the stormy firmament, I fully realized that I was soon to leave the noble stream which had borne me so long and so safely upon its bosom. A thunder-shower rose in the west—its massive blackness lighted by the vivid flashes which played over its surface. The houses of the planters along the river's bank were enveloped in foliage, and the air was so redolent with the fragrance of flowers that I seemed to be floating through an Eden. The wind and the clouds disappeared together, and a glorious sunrise gave promise of a perfect day. With the light came life. Where all had been silent and restful, man and beast now made known their presence. The rising sun seemed to be the signal for taking hold where they had let go the night before. The crowing of cocks, the cries of plantation hands, the hungry neigh of horses, the hundred and one sounds of this work-a-day world, greeted my ears, while my eyes, taking a rapid survey of the surrounding steamers, coal-arks, and barges of every description, carried



quickly to my brain the intelligence that I was near the Crescent City of the Gulf. Soon forests of masts rose upon the horizon, for there were vessels of all nations ranged along the levee of this once prosperous city.

Anxious to escape the officious kindness always encountered about the docks of southern cities, I peered about, hoping to find some quiet corner in which to moor my floating home. Near the foot of Louisiana Avenue I saw the fine boat-house of the "Southern Boat Club," and being pleasantly hailed by one of its members, hove to, and told him of my perplexity. With the ever ready hospitality of a southerner, he assured me that the boat-house was at my disposal; and calling a friend to as-

sist, we easily hauled the duck-boat out of the water, up the inclined plane, into her new quarters.

The row upon the Mississippi from its junction with the Ohio down to New Orleans, including many stoppages, had occupied nineteen days, and had been accelerated by considerable night voyaging. The flow of the Mississippi was about one third faster than that of the Ohio. Lloyd's River Map gives the distance from the mouth of the Ohio to the centre of New Orleans as ten hundred and fifty-five miles, but the surveys of the United States Engineer Corps make this crooked route ten hundred and twenty miles only.

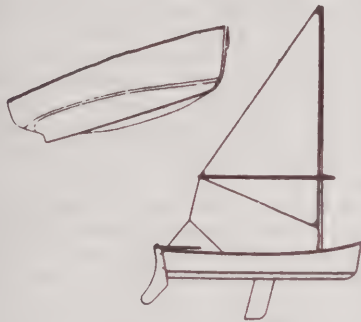
My floating home being now in good

hands, its captain turned his back on the water, and took a turn on land, leaving the river bounded by its narrow horizon, but teeming with a strange, nomadic life, the various types of which afforded a field where much glean- ing would end in but a scanty harvest of good. Already my ears caught, in fancy, the sound of the restless waves of the briny waters of the Gulf of Mexico, and my spirits rose at the prospect of the broader experiences about to be encountered.

[\*note] Since this voyage ended, Captain Boyton has, in the same manner, successfully descended the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers from Cairo to New Orleans.

(To Be Continued)

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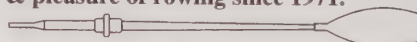
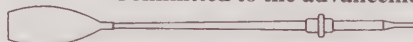
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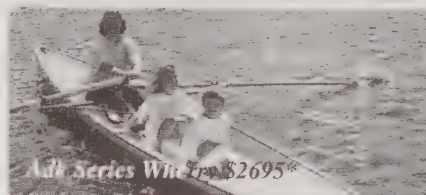
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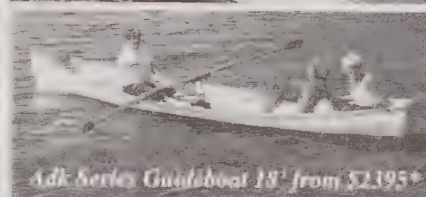
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## Mystic Seaport, Beetle Cats and Danny Olsen

Lynn and I went to Mystic in 1997. We discovered the boathouse there, which maintains a fleet of small boats, both sail and oar, available for rent. The first boat we went out on was the *Sandy Ford*, a sprit sail catboat. Instead of a head bonking boom, the sprit rises from the mast at a sharp angle and supports the sail at the top. The bottom of the sail is nice, soft cloth, the sheet attached on the aft end.

I had never considered catboats. I used to think they were heavy and slow. What I didn't know was all the endearing traits provided by their wide beams. They generally are as wide as half their length. *Sandy Ford* is only 15' long but makes you feel as if you are on a much, much bigger boat. This impression is created by her rock solid stability and by having plenty of leg room to stretch out and relax. She's certainly no *Hot-Rod*, but she sails well and her heavy wood construction provides inertia to keep her moving through the lulls. It also smoothes out surface ripples, which contributes further to the "big boat" aura. This experience made me an instant fan of catboats. Another plus of the wide beam is the resulting shallow draft. A catboat can skim over thin water where most other boats would be aground. I thought of the one that circled Guy and I while we sat stuck in Barnegat Bay that evening long ago.

Sharon Brown is the docent of the boathouse. She is carrying on the work of the late John Gardner, America's small boat guru. I told her of my newfound enthusiasm for the catboat idea and we discussed Beetle cats, of which the boathouse has several. The gaff rigged Beetle is named for its designer. Beetle was known as a builder of whaleboats, as in Moby Dick. He built the first of his new recreational designs in 1921. Something like 4000 of them have been built since. The tradition is carried on today by Beetle Inc., owned by Charley York. Charley maintains a nice website for the boat. There's a very active Beetle cat association, too. Most of their activities are in the Cape Cod vicinity.

I was itchy for a winter project and thought it would be fun and challenging to build a Beetle. Sharon suggested that I visit the Beetle shop in South Dartmouth, Massachusetts, and speak to Bill Sauerbray. Bill works with Charley building new boats and caring for the existing fleet. He gave Lynn and I the "cooks tour" of Beetle Inc. We looked at retired boats outdoors and saw many of the little 12'4" cats snugly resting inside the storage shed on wooden racks. The paint shop is an artist's delight with several boats getting preened in various colors lit by sunbeams coming through the dusty windows. In the boat building area the sweet smell of cedar was a treat for the nostrils. We saw templates and molds there, some dating back to the original production work.

Charley discouraged my idea of building a boat. Bill showed me a boat outdoors that he thought was an excellent candidate for a rebuild because it was fastened with bronze screws. Boats built prior to the early '70s were fastened with steel screws and suffered the effects of rust.

If Lynn hadn't talked me out of it, I would have put the boat on the roof of the car and



## Adventures of a New Jersey Boat Nut

### Conclusion

### Boating from Behind the Statue of Liberty

By Steve Turi © 1998

---

I must down to the seas again, for  
the call of the running tide  
Is a wild call and a clear call that may  
Not be denied.  
John Masefield

---

taken it home. She did have a point, though. The 6' beam of the boat was far wider than my car. We would have looked like a little kid walking around with a big cardboard box over his head.

Bill took a foot long piece of cedar plank and, using a knife, sharpened a pencil and wrote a name and phone number on it. The name and number belonged to Danny Olsen. Danny lives in Astoria, Queens, works as a carpenter at New York's Metropolitan Museum, and restored his own Beetle cat under Bill's supervision. I called Danny and he invited me to go sailing with him. He moors his boat at a funky little boatyard, home to a surprising collection of well-used wooden classics. It's in a heavy industrial section of College Point, Queens.

The sun was shining when I met Danny at his boat, but it was cool and gusty from the northwest, truly a November day. We teetered out in the dinghy and unwrapped the mooring covers. We decided to tie in a reef before we left anchor. Danny guided us away from the mooring and sheeted her in tight. The little cat eagerly bashed her way through the chop. Spray blew over the canvas covered deck and bent oak coaming.

The shore opposite Danny's boatyard is

LaGuardia Airport. As we sailed near, a big airliner took off. It wasn't too close, but I did notice that the passenger in the window just in front of the wing was reading *Time Magazine*.

After a while Danny offered me the tiller. I eased the sheet until the forward edge of the sail just began to want to bulge inward. I pulled it back in just a notch and we continued to burble along happily and without the dramatic spray. Danny warned me not to steer too close to Rikers Island because a police boat would come roaring out to see what we might be up to. It had already happened to him. We sailed back and forth a bit in the main channel of the East River. Hell Gate was to our west and we could see Execution Rock in Long Island Sound to our east just beyond the Whitestone and Throgg's Neck bridges.

Getting back to Danny's anchorage is easy. Simply line up the bow with Shea Stadium.

I really don't know why I haven't begun restoring a Beetle myself. I would like to keep one on a trailer and "dry" sail it, but Bill advised me that the Beetle, with its conventional build of cedar planks on oak ribs, likes to be "wet." My plan of wet/dry cycles would probably make for a leaky boat. Perhaps if I look a little harder, I might find a convenient place to moor one.

A side trip on our visit to the Beetle shop was a stop at the Herreshoff museum in Bristol, Rhode Island. It's housed in the old buildings in which Captain Nat's creation took form. Many boats of his design are on display, and as we looked at them and touched them we realized why Herreshoff was called the "Wizard of Bristol." The shape of each boat is lovely and the construction details like the hand-shaped shear planks are amazing. The variety is wide, too. We saw huge America's Cup defenders, a little sailing skiff on a wood trailer designed for it, and many sizes in between, both sail and power. I was surprised, but the nice people there pronounce the name "Herr'-ess-hoff."

Lynn and I have gone back to Mystic several times. We've gone for rides on the *Breck Marshal*, a 25' catboat, and *Resolute*, a long, sleek Herreshoff design and former tender to one of the titanic J-boats which defended the America's Cup in 1913 or thereabouts. We also took an evening cruise on the *Sabino*, a passenger steamer restored to better than new condition. I spent that voyage in the engine room with engineer Bill King. He had recently torn down both the engine and boiler to their bones and completely restored them. The boiler is stoked with coal by hand. The engine is a vertical, two-cylinder, double expansion model with all its shiny moving parts exposed to view. The engineer answers the polished brass telegraph bells by spinning the throttle valve and throwing reversing levers. Bill figures the engine produces 75 hp at about 150 rpm. It swings an enormous 48" by 72" prop.

### Wyvern, the Bay Hen, and Chance

Steve and Pat Weingart are two of the most wonderful people I've ever met. When they lived in Peekskill, New York, Steve happened to find a nice little sailboat without really trying. They named it *Chance*. They sold *Chance* when they moved to Florida. It wasn't long before they bought a new boat, a fiberglass Bay Hen. Lynn and I visited them and



we trailered the Bay Hen to Lake Worth. We dodged powerboats on the Intracoastal Waterway and had a picnic lunch on a quiet tropical island. I was struck by the contrast between the natural waterways and the forests of high-rise apartment buildings on the ocean beach.

We did this in August and it was hot. The ocean temperature was 92 degrees. I didn't realize how hot it was until after we were home and I looked at a picture Lynn had taken of me on the boat. I looked like a melted blob, despite my sitting in the shade of the canvas Bimini top.

The Bay Hen is gaff rigged and has a dagger board on either side, which makes for a roomy cockpit. There are two berths below and sitting headroom. Steve and Pat made several trips to the Florida Keys. They sailed from island to island, diving at interesting spots and sleeping aboard.

The Bay Hen was a fine boat and lots of fun, but Steve and Pat were dreaming of voyaging to far off places. A bigger boat was called for. They found a nice 30' Alberg. The previous owner had painted a colorful dragon on each side. It rose and dipped along the waterline. They named the boat *Wyvern*, which I think is old English for dragon.

They took Lynn and I for a day sail. We motored south on the inland waterway, opening three bridges on the way to Boca Raton Inlet. We entered the ocean but had to run a mile or so along the beach to avoid the sandbar at the mouth of the inlet. We hung a left, raised sail, and the boat came alive. The Alberg shares a long keeled ancestry with the Alden and moves with a similar grace.

Near the beach the Florida ocean is pale aquamarine. As we got farther out though, it changed to the deepest, purest blue I'd ever seen. There was a strong breeze from the southeast and we happily glided along throwing white spray back at the sparkling intense blue. We sailed to the horizon and returned. We paused in the bay at Boca and had a nice swim and a delicious dinner aboard.

Steve hadn't a chance yet to replace the battery, so the Atomic four was a bit reluctant to start. We got it running and proceeded home in the enchanting glow of the running lights. The engine ran fine and hummed until we got to the dock, almost. It stalled in the canal near the dock. Steve simply let her coast until we were abreast of her spot, threw the tiller over, and she smoothly made a tight U-turn and came to a stop as neat as you please. We simply dropped the dock lines into place.

## Rainbows on the Hudson

Lynn and I met Steve and Helen White through the Weingarts. Steve and Helen introduced us to the Croton Sailing School. It's located in a park on the Hudson River at the town of Croton-on-Hudson. This section of the river is called Haverstraw Bay, and it is three miles wide and about five miles up and down. There are no rocks or obstructions, and the water is 8' to 10' deep everywhere; of course, the main channel is somewhat deeper.

We've gone there more than several times and rented 24' Rainbows. The Rainbow is a Sparkman and Stephens design. I believe they're used for sail training at the Naval Academy at Annapolis. The hull and decks are fiberglass, the masts and spars are aluminum. The fin keel is cast iron with a large bulb on

the bottom. The rudders have an interesting horizontal plane that I imagine adds control when the boat is heeled sharply.

One of our first sails with Steve and Helen was kind of interesting. We had sailed across the river and were close to the main channel, which carries a lot of ship, tug, and barge traffic. Steve called ready about and I focused on the jib sheets. Steve's next words were "hard alee" and then "shit." I turned to look and there was Steve holding the entire tiller in his lap. The bronze fitting at the top of the rudder post had let go.

We dropped the sails and reconnoitered. There was nothing aboard to give us leverage on the rudder. Helen and Lynn bent to the task of retrieving and untangling the wet, muddy anchor and line from the bilge. While they did this, we reset the mainsail and tried to maneuver. It worked. By playing the main sheet in and out and keeping light hand pressure on the rudder head, we were able to proceed slowly.

As we made our way east across the river we looked to our right. Approaching fast was an entire fleet of large sailing yachts, all flying multicolored spinnakers and every other sail they had. Steve was a bit concerned that these big guys were probably racing for a fat purse and wouldn't give us any slack. We filtered through the fleet easily. We then considered the prospect of playing dodge 'em with the moored boats and picking up a mooring in our hobbled condition. When another boat passed near, we hailed them and they radioed for the launch to come out and tow us to the mooring. Subsequent voyages have been a lot more peaceful.

The scenery of the Hudson Valley is spectacular at least. The mountains on both sides are covered with trees that change their costumes for each season. Cloud formations are influenced by the mountains and are unique every day. The sunsets behind the round mountain tops give truth to the fantastic colors seen in paintings of the area. Long freight trains run on the west shore and gleaming streaks of silver on the east shore are Amtrak and Metroliners running on the old right of way established by Commodore Vanderbilt. The cars of the Metroliner commuter trains each carry a name reminiscent of the rich history of the area, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Washington Irving, and Sleepy Hollow, for example. Traffic on the river is light but interesting. There are oceangoing ships, jet skis, and everything in between, power and sail. There are many curious and unusual boats amid the stock pleasure craft. A full size reproduction of Henry Hudson's ship, *Half-Moon*, docks nearby. I've seen many small airplanes circling overhead, enjoying the scene from above.

Rainbows are stable gentle boats and they can move along nicely. I look forward to spending many future afternoons afloat on the mighty Hudson.

## Dreams

Ninety percent of the pleasure of activities, I feel, is derived in the dreaming and anticipation. If that's true, then I'm having a grand time. Many dreams and schemes are in the works. The Beetle cat restoration may begin before I know it. The smell of cedar would fill my garage, maybe I could turn a mast on the lathe, perhaps I could order a kit from the sail maker and sew it myself, maybe...John and

Mary Jean Dux just installed a new diesel in their sailboat, orphaning the Atomic 4. Hmmm. I might build a little wooden runabout around the engine. A brass steering wheel with a mahogany rim would be fun to make...There's a '30s style speedboat hidden in a nearby boatyard. Its shapely hull is made of steel. I wonder if a motorcycle engine could be adapted to it...

PBS television ran a wonderful series made by an English film producer. It was the visual story of his dream vacation come true. He took an old Thames River barge and towed it with an even older tugboat. He left London, crossed the English Channel, and toured much of the continent via rivers and canals. If it's ever on TV again, don't miss it. It's called "Barging Through Europe." I may never be able to make such a trip, however our very own Erie Canal is beckoning. Hmmm. One hundred and fifty miles to Albany, 350 to Buffalo, and there's Niagara Falls and Lake Erie. Hmmm. Maybe I could find a nice boat to borrow...

The Tom's River Wooden Boat Show has been a treat to visit. It draws a nice bunch of nifty boats, boat owners, and builders. Most are native to New Jersey (boats and owners), and I see classic items there that I remember from my not so long ago youth. Little outboard runabouts built of diagonally laid veneers that sweep back into distinctive tumblehome stems. Sleek powerful Pacemakers were the deep-sea fisherman's choice in their day. The boats with an attitude the Garveys. They tonged for clams in Barnegat Bay during workaday life, but the addition of a big V-8 from a car made them racers. They never had mufflers and always seemed to be painted gray. An occasional Barnegat Bay Sneakbox appears at the show. Their cedar planked design goes back to the 1800s. Many of the showboats have little "For Sale" signs on them. Hmmm....

A recent visit to the antique boat show at Mystic provided me a whiff of Uncle Joe's old Elco when I poked my head into the bilge of one on display there.

The next 50 years are full of promise of boating adventures. I'm lookin' forward to em.

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If you've always thought of canoe-poling as meant for expeditioners going up rapids or for goofy whitewater stunt action, think again. There's a new way to pole in town. It's a great way to go for shallow flatwater action, upstream and down. I'd never seen or heard of it done here in Michigan but I tell ya, it's a great way to go.

If you're tired of bogging down in shallow water and want to go faster than you can paddle... if you pine for a better VIEW of the river...try poling! It's fast and scenic: Two aspects I'd never heard bragged about it anywhere else. Both of these aspects are best for water that's 2' deep or less, which is what we have a lot of in Michigan.

With poling, since you're standing, you get a better view of the river bottom all around you than any way else. I was amazed at the fish and aquatic life that I never saw in my previous paddling. What a new perspective. It was like floating in air down the river. The sky reflection on the water seemed a lot more crisp.

But don't forget to wear Polaroid glasses! (These should be a "must have" item for all canoeists. I don't know why I'd only used them for fishing before.)

See, I'd been paddling a few times on our sucky local river last fall. The water was VERY low. But our local tree color was GREAT. I was underwhelmed by the view of the horizon. Our river runs in a woody ditch. So, sitting down low for paddling, I just plain felt trapped. Who'd put up with that? I stood up! Now, I paddle a tippy, narrow, flatwater kelvar racing canoe, a beat up old Wenonah Advantage, 16'6", I think. Not the latest item, but a sporty 30-pounder anyway. I had no idea how poling would work out, but what the hey. I stood up. I could balance! So I rode my bike home and whittled a 12' maple sapling from the stand in my yard (about one inch diameter) and rode back to the river. I hopped in and took off like a rocket.

Poling is like riding a bike. When you're moving, it's very stable even in a race boat. Actually, I found that it was like lots of sports. I found it to be like skateboarding, snowboarding and windsurfing, with the footwork and body English that I do. You can lean and bank and cut a small, light canoe around obstacles nicely when you're standing up, braced. I also found it to be like cross country ski skating. I can get my whole body into it. Sure, I got wet a lot at first, but pretty soon balancing was easy and very stable. And mostly I just got my feet wet. (When you tip over in paddling, you often get a MORE wet.) What had me so worked up was that the view of the scenery was so much improved! Standing in the boat and working my way up and down the river made me feel like I was WALKING on top of the water. The woody canopy was much lower. It was very interesting having my head now halfway between the scenery and the water, rather than so close to the water. When poling a race boat, furthermore,

## Canoe Poling: Not Just for Downeasters Anymore Great for Jetting the Shallows, Great Views & An Allbody Workout!

By Jeff Potter

you don't stop to look in the boat much. You look up the river and that helps you stay oriented for best balancing. Well, it's just so unusual. I guess when you're standing, you simply get a much wider view of your surroundings. A casual glance lets you see so much more of a river. It was delightful and I was hooked.

When you're poling in shallow water, you don't get very wet when you fall out. When I'd hit a log and get tossed, really I was just stepping out of the boat. OK, I was thrown, but it felt like just stepping out. I'd get hardly any water in the boat. And I could step right back in. It's amazing how much easier the whole operation is than getting seated every time you get in and out of a canoe.

When I encountered VERY shallow stretches, I could step and out and walk the boat through them with the bowline. It was an easy, casual affair. Walking an empty race boat is like walking air. Plus, just having the chance to WALK up a shallow river is a great thing (that only fishermen usually get to do). In rough paddling where there's blowdowns, you're in and out of the boat a lot. I call it Boat-O-Cross or Cross Country Paddling. Now it's easy to treat those obstacles like simple hurdles. Much easier than working from the seated position.

Amazingly, when you find shallow obstacles, you can stay in the boat most of the time. You put your weight on the pole, unweight your feet and hop the boat over that washed-log with ease in one shove.

It's surprising how warm the river water was all through October. I never got chilled. It really extended my "fun time in the water" season. It was very nice to get a little wet every day.

So here's the technique: I position my legs feet akimbo, snowboarder style. I make sure that I have a bow-light trim. To do this I stand behind my seat. I brace my shin against the seat thwart (a foam pad is essential.) I mostly use a strong right side, with left foot forward, but actually I can switch just fine for long distance workload balancing. When poling "strongside" on the right, I grasp the pole with my right hand at its balance point, left hand about 3' higher, maybe 2' down from the end. I stand up tall and reach forward and plant the pole. When I'm really going for it, I shift all weight to my forward left foot and get the weight out there. Then I collapse on the pole, drop my butt and shove to the rear. I don't let go of either hand. Then I recover and do it again. When I'm going gonzo, I push through with my right foot to get more distance and shift all weight to it off the left foot. I've also squirted the boat out from under me in doing this.)

To get proper tracking control, I stand in the right side of the hull for strong rightside poling. This lets the curve of the tumblehome offset the overpowered rightside nicely. Com-

bined with a light bow, a poleshove pushes you quite straight down the river.

You will have to often switch to leftside anyway. To do this, I leave my feet and hands where they are and just whip the pole over the front of the boat. As I drop and shove, I let go of the "trapped" right hand and finish poling with left hand alone (much of the time).

I find that this method, done smoothly with minimal bounce, goes VERY FAST in shallow water up and down stream. Sadly, I haven't timed a comparison to race paddling yet, but I've done enough to feel that it's faster. When I hit deep water areas, I can still use the pole, unless it gets over 5' deep. I can always use the pole as a very effective paddle. There's no need to lose way or balance due to surprises on the bottom.

If I hit a sucky, mucky bottom, I push more gently, but if I get heavy polesuck, it's easy to jerk out once you get used to it.

I've read, of course, of the various New England fancy pole resources, so I suppose I'll be buying a "duck foot" from those ax-equipment people. "Real" poles often have "duck feet" on them that spread to keep a pole from sinking into mud as far. Then they collapse on recovery. The other end of a "real" pole usually has a short rock stud for purchase on rocky bottoms. We Michiganders mainly have an "average" riverbottom. Not too mucky, not too rocky. My maple sapling has held up fine "naked".

I tried all kinds of tricks, including some I'd read about. Double overhand shoves, going on down the pole. I tried some cartwheeling and baton-twirler handling. Each style has its place.

I notice that I don't do much of what I believe is the Harry Rock racing method. Harry is Mr. Poling, I've heard. But I just haven't been able to find anything in print on sport poling. We may have to have a Michigan-New England tourney (on the river of MY choice). Harry, I gather, recommends a cross-hull stance (feet side by side) and a cartwheeling pole action for his top speed. Well, I find the cross-hull to be lousy for balance. When I hit a rock I go on my face inside my hull. Yuck. I see that cartwheeling, with a quick pole plant and weight-drop on each side, works quickly, but I really can't get much oomph into it. I think that those New Englanders mainly use big heavy boats. I plan on trying even faster, tipper hulls for my Michigan Style. May the best win!

In rocky areas, it's great fun shifting my weight around from foot to foot or scootching back some, to dance the boat on through. It's like strolling down a nice shady lane. Stream-hiking: I heard the Japanese call it "shwanboring", anyone ever hear of this?

I found I could really work the old arms, legs and torso! One shove sends me maybe 12' down the river. I could get much more body power by poling than I do by paddling. I could really dyno-shove the hull around with my feet just like a snowboard. Catch that rail! As a paddler, I tell you it is SO nice to stand up, stretch and work the legs when you're on the water!

What a new perspective!

Oh, and bring your paddle along. When you do want to sit down in a deep section, a 10'-12' pole will tuck into the bow area of a solo flatwater canoe just fine without getting in the way of normal sit'n'switch paddling or your legs.

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# The Old J 80 Johnson

By Robb White.



The main goal in my life is to get to the day when I can quit burning gasoline. When I was a young man, I loved anything that burned the stuff and chased those machines with the same fervor that some young men chase women. I guess the same physiology drives both desires because... well.... anyhow it ain't the same anymore but I still get a slight twitch when I see a little outboard motor.

An old man came to the shop with an old outboard right about the time I shipped my last boat in August. I normally stop proselytizing about these boats then so I can have time to do my logging and sawmill work in the wonderful cool of the fall, so I agreed to fix the old motor for this man. He had an interesting story. It seems that when he was a young man, he had borrowed this engine from his grandfather. Because he was young and had other things on his mind, he neglected to return it until it had froze and busted.

It was one of those old outboards which have a brass piston waterpump driven off of a cam on the propeller shaft. Since it is a positive displacement rig the water squirts out of the pee-hole in a regular, strong cyclic way at the rate of about three strokes to the squirt (is this a metaphor?) and all the water does not drain back out of the engine when you shut it off unless you take out a little tap down on the foot that says "Drain". If you don't do that, when it freezes it makes a hell of a mess.

It was an old Johnson from back in the days when "horsepower" was just beginning to be used to mis-describe the capability of a machine. This old thing was bragged up to be about 1hp in the days when people knew what a horse could do. No doubt, there were some who, after trying one out, raised their eyebrows when it could hardly push the boat through weeds that a horse would have dragged out of the pond and spread on the field for manure. Now I have a 5php (peak horsepower) vacuum

cleaner that runs on 22 guage wire. It might blow hot air as hard as a horse but not like five... not when they are at their peak anyway. That ain't got nothing to do with this story though.

What had happened was that my customer had ruined his granddaddy's old Johnson and all his life had felt guilty about it. Though he didn't say it, I bet his grandfather had never let him forget. Now this man, a successful businessman, retired, had gotten tired of looking at the old motor that he kept as some sort of override limit on his happiness after his grandfather had died. Somehow he had found out about the twitch I get at the sight of such and had brought the damned thing to me. "Can you fix it back to where it is as good as it was before it froze and busted?" he asked.

"Does a sanctified Baptist love a shiny new S.U.V.?" said me. When I got it all taken apart ("Carb Cleaner" in the aerosol can, \$1.69 for two at AutoZone is just the ticket) I found out that what was busted was the pump housing in the foot, the watertight clamp thing that held the foot onto the brass pipe that went up to the head, the tubes that conveyed the water up every whichaway to the cylinder... and the damned base of the crankcase where the water went into the engine of the thing.

I fixed the waterpump by turning a little liner sleeve to fit the undamaged piston. I replaced the busted tubes. I welded the aluminum foot clamp after about five tries (old 1920's aluminum is strange stuff) cut new threads and reworked the seal but I was stymied about the busted crankcase bottom until I remembered a brilliant genius with whom I used to work back in the tugboat days. He cast a brand new one for me. Ain't life sweet?

The old motor ran good too... first pull, hot or cold... had to work the choke and single needle valve with some expertise. My grandchildren and I took it to Lake Iamonia on my old Grumman Sport boat to see what it was like. Though it thrummed the aluminum pretty good, it didn't vibrate nearly as bad as I expected. It is one of those primitive old slow-speed, two-cycle engines that aspirates right into the cast iron cylinder when the little two inch piston opens the port at the bottom of the stroke.

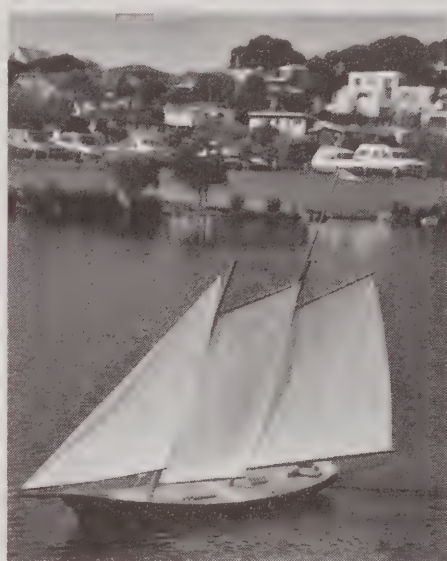
Since the fuel doesn't go through the crankcase like modern two cycle engines, all that is lubricated by an expostulation of oil and gasoline (8oz., a small Coca Cola bottle, to the gallon) from the cylinder at each compression stroke through little tubes to both crankshaft bearings and through holes in the crankshaft to the connecting rod journal, wrist pin, and all, like a four cycle engine with an oil pump... kind of marvelous.

There are no seals on anything (except a regular adjustable, leather packing gland, "Chicago Rawhide" on the propeller shaft) and that makes it smoke out from under the flywheel a little bit while it is cold but when it warms up, it is cleaner running than a British Seagull. It has a dry exhaust and you can see how much it is smoking and lean it on down with the big-knob style needle valve. Got a big aluminum take-apart muffler sort of like a Model T which it is good to avoid when you have to tilt it, that and the spark plug and the flywheel. It is a lot like handling a crab.

I had it running in my garbage can rig when the man came back. He watched it for a while, then he gave me a check and said, "You keep that thing".

Mark Steele in America's Cup  
Challenge City Tells Of

## An America Model in Auckland



A great deal has been written over the years about the yacht *America*, and among the fine books on this famous yacht, I consider *The Low Black Schooner* by yacht historian John Rousmaniere the most excellent.

I am sure that a great many modelmakers have undertaken both static and sailing models of *America*, but here in New Zealand, RC sailing models of this famous vessel are rare, in fact I had never heard of one until New Zealand professional ship modeller, Peter Sewell contacted me and turned up for a sail with his three-eighth-inch to the foot sailing model.

Peter is a very meticulous and highly skilled modelmaker, whose work covers a wide spectrum, and whose models grace the homes and offices in many countries. He lives and works from home at Clevedon, south of Auckland, and *America* is his first RC model, in fact he has now built several hulls in fibreglass from a custom wood mould.

The writer has had a go, and the boat sails very well and there has been interest both from overseas and locally due to the America's Cup held in Auckland, and perhaps further stirred by the fine display models in the Dennis Conner cup collection that has been on display at the Stars & Stripes Challenge base.

Peter's model has a deck made from 6mm planked kauri, masts and spars made of cedar, and sails of Dacron spinnaker cloth. Beautifully made deck fittings are a mixture of kauri and rimu.

One of the wonderful aspects of model yachting, I think anyway, is the wide variety of subjects chosen by modelmakers, a choice that covers the widest possible spectrum from commercial fishing vessels, to cruising boats under sail, to those that race. In another article I'd like to show readers by way of a voyage through several countries, what other model enthusiasts I am in touch with are doing. Perhaps some readers may then agree that the choice of subject is limitless, and who knows, someone else's choice of model may just get you going.



I have made thousands of oars in my time. Usually I'm standing/sitting in a bar listening to a Foremost Authority (FA) tell me Something Vitally Important (SVI) (to them anyway) and I pick up the plastic stirrer, flatten and curve one end, pinch in the middle, voila, a nice curved spoon oar, and I row happily away in my skiff *Reverie* until, "You haven't listened to a word I've said," or the equivalent comes through, sometimes with oaths, sometimes with tears. But what bore can compete with an oar?



Pulchritude, oars and the blanks, also blank stares from the watchbirds that watch you!

Several days ago I heard a voice and it said, "Make Oars!" Now these voices don't come very often (not since I stopped drinking anyway) and as you probably know from your voices they are just frightening enough to consider obeying. I have probably handled hundreds of real oars in my time but my knowledge of how they are made is (still) abysmal.

There are, true, several set of oars in my garage of the "beach find" type. Some even come close to matching. There was no real need to "Make Oars!", but a voice is a voice!

The only oars I remember actually buying were a pair of beautiful varnished spruce jobs at Abercrombie's on Madison Avenue in 1958 after an unexpected bonus materialized. They were \$15, which doesn't sound like much these days, but neither would the bonus. Chickenfeed we'd call it today, but in those days it would make Frank Perdue's feed bill for a week. Naturally I took the oars to the office for a couple of days so people could fall over them, then hung them on my apartment wall where they covered a nasty, drafty crack. Also good for drying socks. They were about the only things that weren't stolen when my burglars made their first pass. Don't think a garden apartment on the West Side is such a great thing unless you like traffic that removes your material things wholesale.

These oars had wonderful thick oiled leathers and a "keep" (button?) ring of similar

## "I Made Oars!"

By Foster Nostrand

material secured with dozens of shiny brass nails, and copper guards on the tips of the blades. I took them out weekends to my job as lifeguard at Beekman Beach on Oyster Bay. Pretty spiffy, my own private oars! And they looked great right up until I broke both trying to row the lifeguard skiff after a windblown beach ball, about the only "action" we ever got.

And where did they break? Right at the oarlock where those dozens of brass nails shone so brightly holding on the "keeper" (button?). On both of them. At the same time. The fastenings took so much space in the wood the break was inevitable. I learned rule one: "Never use your own oars on the job." I paddled the boat back with one blade half, sitting in the extreme bows to much loudish laughter by the other "guards".

The lifeguard skiff, by the way, was a graceful little marvel made by Pete Layton in his Oyster Bay boatshop, probably as good a model of a flat bottomed rowboat as has ever been built. Her rowing lines precluded the efficient use of an outboard, so the model is never seen today. She was a princess and everybody loved her, even the night people who regularly stole her for after hours adventures.

The supplied oars were tough ash jobbies with no sissifying leathers and I do believe they abraded the galvanizing off the locks before they showed any wear at all. Heavy to carry, but I learned then that a nicely balanced pair of oars doesn't weigh a thing when you're rowing. They were also handy in leveraging the boat over when we washed her and jacking up the Volkswagens for the mysterious repairs we all used to do.

Anyway, realizing that I knew nothing about making oars (and how do they make a needle?) the only obvious choice was avoid all that boring research work and make a pair "my way". This simple phrase has, over the years, caused strong men to blanch, but there were no strong men involved; only me, and the project proceeded solo.

I did go to my local, very trendy boat supply house and try to price a 6' pair. They are big in titanium shafted boron fiber Kevlar kayak double paddles for \$200, but no wooden oars. "No call for 'em," said the twelve year old clerk. "Nobody ever even asked me for oars!" I scouted two pair at different "antique" stores: \$38 bucks for a bowlegged set that was so chipped they looked like ice saws (which they also had for sale at \$150). The others (at \$55) weren't a pair at all, but shared those egregious oarlocks that are pinned right through the loom, precluding balancing, feathering or sliding them smoothly into the boat.

The oars in my garage were all "found", many on Oyster Bay beaches. In the old days they rented rowboats with two sets of so called oars, no lunatic would rent an outboard motor to the kind of inept boater who could and frequently would, lose an oar overboard. But enough of the philosophical meanderings.

To make oars, I needed wood. I buy an 8' 2"x4" at Home Depot (HD) that is "fir". It is so wet I saw it down the middle and sneak it into my "office" where it rests unnoticed for two weeks next to the radiator. Both pieces develop alarming warps, but by some miracle

straighten themselves out after time. Well, almost. The wood looks too white to be fir, but what do I know? The big guy at HD in the fetching orange apron said, "fir" and it only cost \$2.50. The scrap was impressively tough to break up for the woodstove, if that means anything.

The first cuts on the tablesaw remove stock to create a taper, but on one plane only. Now my favorite tool of all, the bandsaw, comes into play to produce the curves for the blade and the side pieces. I have decided to glue the oar blades together as my only "good" oars look like they were made that way. My bandsaw, a really cheap one, now sprangs the last blade and I'm back to HD. None of their blades are the right size! My saw calls for 56 and 1/8; HD has 56 and 7/8 if they had them, which they ain't. Why the difference, I ask. Where is 56 and 1/8 standard? Orange apron ventures "Tibet?"

Now, to find out where in blazes I got the saw? You guessed it. Harbour Freight! They have blades (at least in their catalog) for half the price of HD (who didn't have them). I hurry off an order for five, and wait and wait. After a while I call and find I gave them a bum credit card number and they decided not to do business with me. Reorder. Six days later and \$15 "air express" fee, they arrive. I am, you understand, aflame to "Make Oars!" By some miracle these blades were the right size, sharp as sawblades. I ordered more, and a 60lb vise, only because shipping was free!

Next the loom was trimmed to the taper and the "spoon" curve and side pieces cut. For some reason my \$2.50 "fir" and the new bandsaw blades had a mystical way of creating their own path. The grain in this wood was most strong willed. I could have saved a lot of trouble by taking more care in scribing and cutting the curved blades, but my father accused me of doing things by the "crash, bang method" and he was right about a lot of other things too.

After planing and fiddling, the pieces fit well enough for the epoxy glue which fortu-



The "glue tool" makes nice punctures and roughs up the stock, the better for the epoxy to grab.



nately has well known "void filling" capabilities. First I ran my "glue tool" up and down the glue surfaces. This is nothing more than several old crosscut saw blades bolted together, which rolled over a wood surface produces a nicely punctured and roughed up glue line. I had oars after a fashion. But full of "irregularities". Nothing that a heavy grinder wouldn't remedy. Somewhat. So, oars!

Then began the advertising copywriting: "No two alike!", "Recycled materials", "Hand-made by retarded veterans!" The chafe guards were cut from old firehose with the bandsaw (a most versatile tool) and stuck on the loom with 3M's 5200 (a miracle adhesive if you've got plenty of time. Don't buy "Fast Cure 5200" 'cause it sets up in the tube). I am still waiting for an answer, rebate, replacement for a crosslinked tube that I send back to 3M. Looks like they had a turkey with the "fast cure".

The "keeper" is a rubber grommet you can find lying about muffler shops when you're having your "guaranteed for life" muffler replaced for \$300. "Oh we replaced the muffler free. It was the resonator and the tailpipe and the fastenings that cost \$300". Another story. These keeper buttons can be slid (with difficulty) up and down the loom to adjust for oarlock widths. The oars are like all my boats, look good but don't look too close.

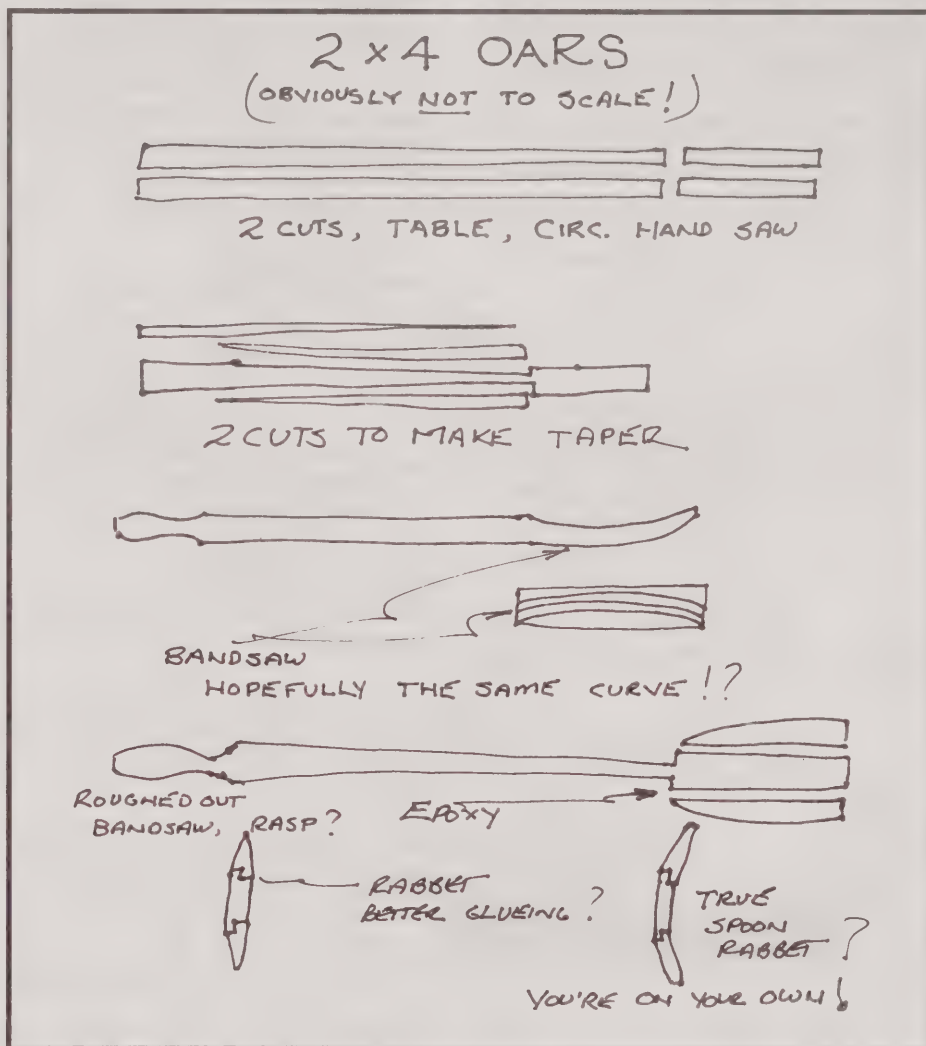
So far, exactly nobody has said, "Hey, where you get those beautiful oars?" But then, nobody around here even looks my way when I'm out rowing. Or sculling with the "falling leaf" method. Thing is, I know how to make oars and will make a much better set next time. And we all know my "tidewater" oar sets in the garage are worth a fortune at antique fairs. Right? Yeah, right! And I settled with my personal demons one night during a wind storm. I stood on the back stoop and during a particularly loud squall, yelled up into the swirling oaks, "I made oars!" and I'll swear a small voice replied, "So?"



The "finished" (well, a little more sanding and varnishing) product. The "tidewater" oars in the background are worth thousands at antique markets. Right?



Proof! Oaring with the rows as people around here are likely to say.



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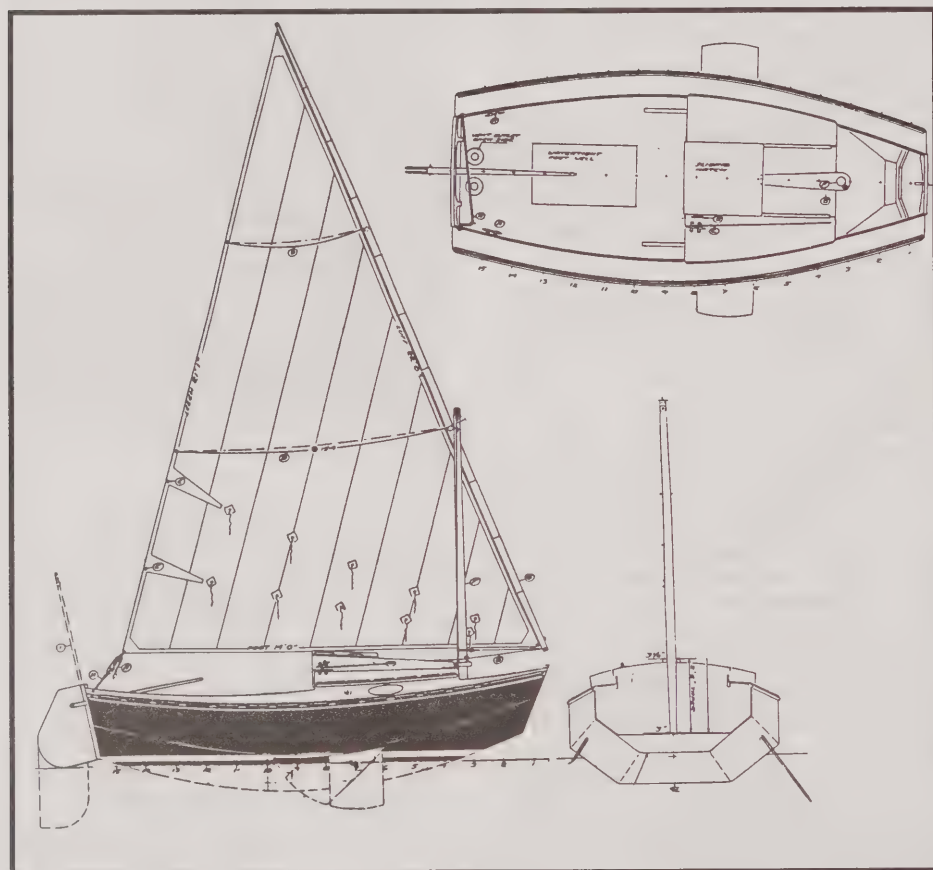
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## Bolger on Design Pocket Cruising Pram "Nymph Cubed"

Design #527. 15'6"x 7'0"x 10'6":  
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plan shown here, all laid out. We had quite a bit of construction and cabin arrangement in pencil.



At this point we had misgivings about it. It had begun to look like a long job to finish after the first rush of basic assembly; the old story, that a bare hull looks deceptively like a boat, that has trapped a lot of people including some who should have known better. The ergonomics of the cuddy were unsatisfactory. And given the prejudice against pram bows in anything but tenders, and the unfamiliarity of the lateen rig, it seemed likely that it would be a hard sell regardless of its merits. We put it aside for reflection and never went back to it.

It would have been a highly respectable sailer of its class. No boat eleven feet on the waterline is going to sail very fast, but it would have felt spirited and been handy. It would have looked neat and shipshape under sail since it was laid out in such a way that two people could sit on the weather side without spoiling her fore-and-aft trim. It would have carried enough ballast to carry sail very well. It's too low-sided to have a seagoing range of stability though the high bilge and low rig would have made it forgiving enough for fine-weather coastal cruising. For that matter, much worse seaboats have crossed oceans, with luck and skill.

She would have been noisy at anchor, with much slapping under the flat part of the bow overhang. As some antidote for that, she could usually get into a very smooth berth, between her less-than-knee-deep draft and ability to strike her rig down for less than four-foot bridge clearance. She would dry out nicely upright on mud, but you'd have to be very careful that there was nothing there but mud since the designed hull planking was going to be only 3/8" thick. Making part or all of her ballast in the form of a steel shoe under the midships bottom would have been a good idea. There is no place to get really comfortable in the tiny cuddy and it would be bound to be damp with drip from the hatch.

The pros and cons of the lateen rig are expounded in Chapter 20 of our book *103 Sailing Rigs* (which we can supply for \$25ppd). The very short mast, only 11' long, is handy when the rig has to come down. The absence of a boom to drag in the water in a knock-down is a major safety item. The sail is powerful and close-winded if it's well cut and knowledgeably handled. It has good reefed balance and lowers and furls quickly and reliably. It does not need any expensive fittings to work. The 22-1/2' foot yard would be more or less unhandy in a berth or on a trailer, though it can be left standing, or partly raised, with the sail brailled to it, when she's afloat. We've designed several lateeners, and sailed traditional lateeners in the Mediterranean; they work well enough to be used more than they are.

This is one of those designs that is good fun on paper, especially for the very young, not good value in reality.

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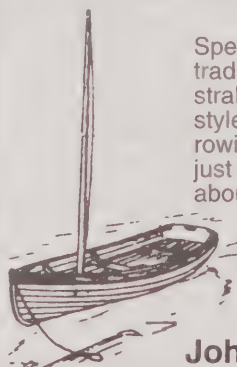
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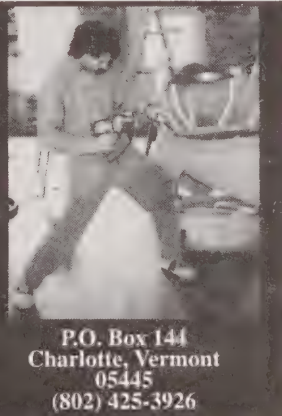
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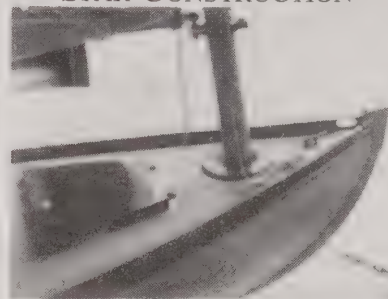
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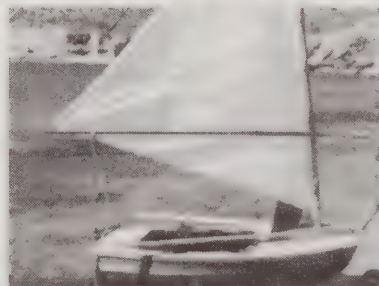


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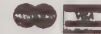


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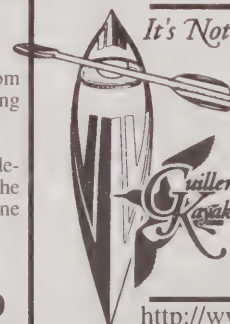
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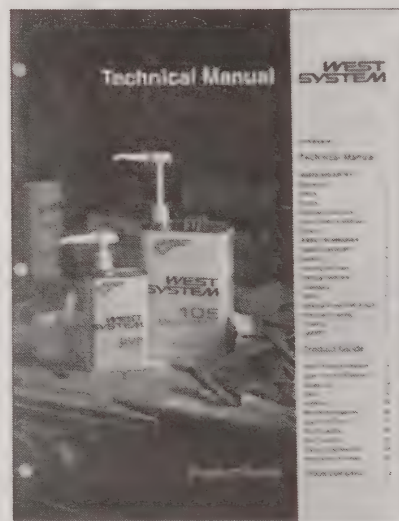
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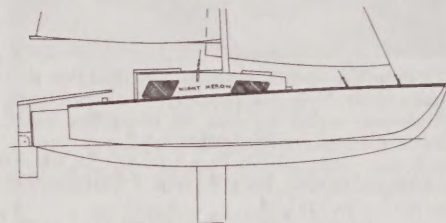
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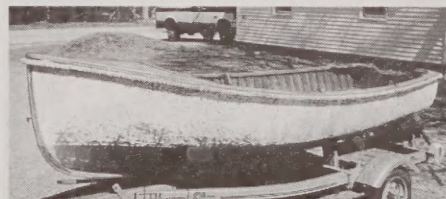
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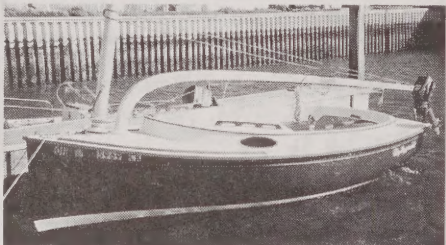


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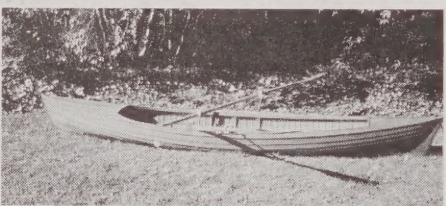
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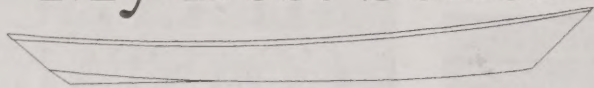
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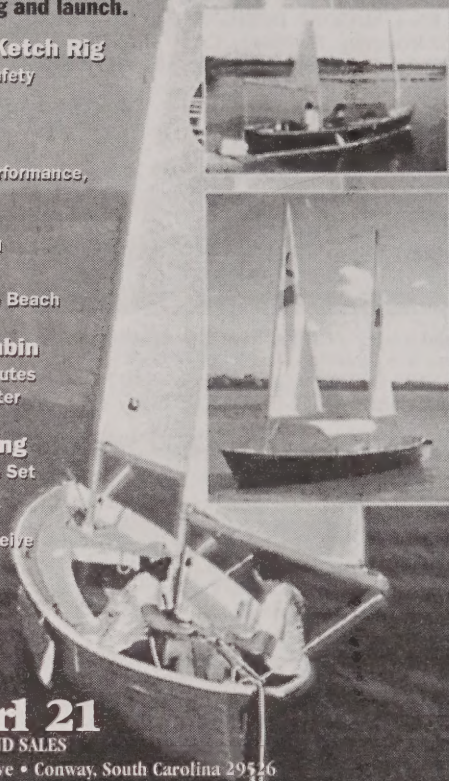
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